



Housing@21

Oldham Report 2024/25

Image: Residents Trevor, Dorothy and Jean with Parish Councillor Barbara Beeley
at Old Mill House's makeover party



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Thank you



Welcome and Introduction

The 2024/25 year continued to be a challenging one for residents in the social housing sector. Despite the rising costs and pressures affecting everyone, I am pleased to report that with the continued partnership and positive ways of working with Oldham Council, our resident satisfaction score was 94 percent. We will always strive to improve this further, however, this is one of the higher scores in the sector and circa 20 percent higher than the sector average.

Recognising the economic challenges facing our residents, we increased the size and reach of the Helping Hands initiative to support residents with grants totalling £28,000 across 105 households; up from £10,000 and 53 homes in the previous year. We were able to fund these through support from Oldham Council and Housing 21.

The team worked very well to achieve operating efficiencies leaving us the headroom to support those with the highest needs. An example of the improved efficiency is void re-lets; on average across the year, the team filled vacancies in 10 days versus a target of 14 days.

This not only helps house more people quickly but also provides an additional four days of rental income which supports the operating economics.

This past year was extra special because it marked the 175th anniversary of Oldham as a borough and coincided with Housing 21's diamond anniversary, marking 60 years as a housing association. We celebrated these occasions with residents and added events to our frequent meetings whilst continuing to liaise with residents to improve their local neighbourhood and community experiences. During the Board's visits to the schemes, we had the pleasure to talk to many residents, see their social interactions in communal spaces and see first-hand that residents feel supported and connected.

In terms of services, we are grateful to our suppliers and partners and highlight MioCare and Re-Engage as two organisations whose work helps to build activity projects that improve the wellbeing and quality of life for our residents. Thank you to all our partners and suppliers.

In terms of operating responsiveness, we have managed to improve upon our average reply time or resident correspondence from six days in the previous year to five days this year, versus a contract target of eight days. Again, we strive to improve at all levels and have

increased opportunities for employees to undertake training and qualifications, including Housing 21's "Leading to Excellence" programme.

Over the next year, we have a range of improvement works planned, including the installation of new kitchens, fencing, boilers and windows. In addition, several communal lounges will be refreshed with new decor, carpets and furniture all with full involvement and consultation of residents.

None of this excellent work would be possible without the culture, attitude and desire of employees in Oldham to go the extra mile. That is something to be proud of and rightly should be recognised. To the team - you continue to do a great job. We admire, respect and applaud your enthusiasm to keep improving. Thank you very much!

Suki Kalirai

**Chair of Oldham Retirement
Housing Partnership (ORHP)**



Head of Service — Overview

It's been another action-packed year, and celebrating Housing 21's diamond anniversary was most certainly a highlight. Seeing all the different ways that residents celebrated was truly special.

Our employees had lots to celebrate this year too, with a number receiving promotions, gaining qualifications and reaching milestones working with us. Well done to everyone and thank you for all your hard work throughout the year.

Looking forward, we have lots of planned works in the pipeline including new kitchens, fencing, boilers and windows, and we will be working with several contractors to complete this work. Alongside this, there will also be makeovers with new carpets and furniture in some of our communal lounges. We will work closely with residents to understand their preferences and ensure their voices shape the choices we make. We will aim to keep disruption at each scheme to a minimum, we hope the improvements will reflect what matters most to the community and be welcomed by everyone.

Listening to and acting on resident feedback is something that is a priority to Housing 21, now more than ever with the new consumer standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) which applies to all social landlords, including councils and housing associations. It is vital we communicate to residents, listen to feedback and keep them informed of decisions that impact them.

In this year's annual report, we've set out several examples of 'You Said, We're Doing', where you can see improvements that have been made from listening to resident feedback. Whether it's asking a contractor to visit a scheme to explain how a new boiler system works, liaising with local councillors on matters that affect our schemes or supporting our communities to gain access to grant funding, residents are at the heart of everything we do.

While accessing funding can be especially challenging for those who aren't part of a constituted group, we're working with our contractors to launch the Oldham Community Fund — a new initiative that will be open to all residents. As applications come in, we're listening closely to what our communities are telling us. Their voices will guide how we shape and deliver support in the year ahead. We remain committed to working collaboratively, responding to real needs, and making a meaningful difference together.

Dawn Aston-Adams
Head of Oldham PFI Service



**'Violet Hill resident, John checking
on the plants at the scheme'**

Performance Results, Compliments and Complaints



Proportion of nuisance complaints resolved or suitably rectified

Target 95% — Actual 100%



Proportion of rent collected

Target 98% — Actual 102%*

*Due to rent paid in advance



Average time to respond to customer correspondence

Target 8 days — Actual 5 days



Average time to complete non-urgent repairs

Target 21 days — Actual 6 days



Compliments

We received **37 compliments** in total during the period.

- Employees — **6**
- Repairs — **26**
- Grounds Maintenance — **5**



Complaints

We received **5 formal complaints**, and all were resolved at stage one of our two-stage Complaints Policy.

- Related to repairs — **3**
- Another resident — **1**
- Issue with scheme — **1**

Helping Hands Fund

Between April 2024 and March 2025, **£27,968.99** in funding was awarded to residents through our Helping Hands Fund (jointly funded by Oldham Council and Housing 21), with 105 successful applications.

Examples of what the funding has been spent on:

- Food vouchers due to residents struggling with the increased living costs.
- White goods such as cookers, dryers, and fridge freezers, and other items such as beds and mattresses.

We also supported a resident in purchasing a doorbell, helping them feel safer and more secure in their home following an increase in thefts in their area.

“The support made moving so much easier. We were able to buy furniture with the payment and we are so thankful, we would have struggled for a while otherwise.”

Mr Ali, recipient of a Helping Hands grant

“I will be eternally grateful for the support I received from the Helping Hands Fund, it helped with the transition of moving into Trinity House. I had hardly any furniture, just a mattress. The fund has helped me turn my flat into a home that I enjoy every day.”

Karen, Trinity House resident



Diamond Celebrations

In 2024, Housing 21 celebrated its 60th anniversary as a housing association, and many schemes across communities in Oldham took the opportunity to celebrate.

The organisation contributed towards these events so that residents could celebrate properly!



School House marked the occasion with a '60s flower power' themed party, while Aster House held a 'celebrating 60' party in their communal lounge and Old Mill House residents invited 'Elvis Presley' to party with them.



Old Mill House residents enjoying 'Elvis Presley'



School House residents and employees 'swinging into the 60s'



Celebrating our Employees

Our employees had a lot to be proud of this year, with some receiving long service awards and promotions.

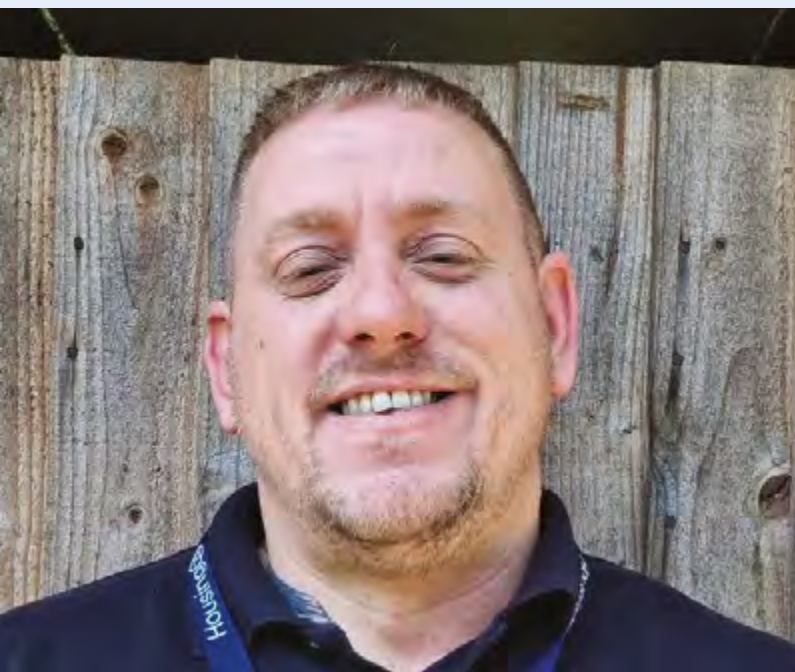


Karen Simpson, Local Housing Manager at Cloughgate House celebrated 25 years' service.

Adele Jones, Local Housing Manager at Spring Lees Court reached her 15 years' service.



Caroline Taylor, Local Housing Manager was successful with a secondment as Neighbourhood Services Manager.



Dave Ransted, Night Concierge was successful in gaining a Local Housing Manager role.



Tina Brown from Tandle View Court and **Gemma Mosoph** from Charles Morris House were both successful in promotions to Extra Care Local Housing Managers.



Well done to everyone!

Transforming Spaces

In August, both residents and partner organisations came together to celebrate Old Mill House's makeover. The conservatory, garden and restaurant have been transformed to create a more welcoming and useful space for residents and members of the community to socialise in.

New furniture and doors were installed to ensure members of the public visiting the restaurant no longer passed through the communal lounge, helping to create a more private and comfortable space for residents.

Dianne Hayes, Extra Care Local Housing Manager, said:

“Residents can access the garden more easily now, the new doors have made a huge difference, and the lounge and conservatory are warmer and welcoming to all. Residents are thrilled with the result.”



Food, Health and Wellbeing

Many of our schemes feature restaurants that serve hot, nutritious meals to both residents and the local community at very affordable prices, with a strong emphasis on promoting health and wellbeing.

At St Herbert's Court, Anna's Community Kitchen is open Monday to Friday from 9:30am to 2pm serving delicious, healthy meals. Throughout the school holidays, they provided children in the community with a free meal. Anna and her team cooked, packed and delivered meals to approximately 1,750 children over the Christmas holidays. This incredible work is supported by residents and employees at St Herbert's Court who held fundraising events in the build-up to the holidays to support the effort. This is a wonderful way to support residents' wellbeing by helping them stay connected to the local community.

Anna's Kitchen also provides valuable volunteering opportunities in catering, particularly for individuals who face various challenges. Many members of her team are living with learning disabilities, recovering from illness or are non-native English speakers. Anna is also hoping to begin some fitness classes in the communal lounge, which residents are eager to get involved with.

Heather's Kitchen, which operates from Trinity House and Aster House, also focuses on promoting resident wellbeing by running a Sunday lunch club throughout the winter months, so that residents can get together and enjoy a warm meal. Residents raised money, that was match funded by the Housing 21's Community and Wellbeing Fund, which meant that they were able to enjoy a meal for just £3 per person.

The club was a huge success as it provided an opportunity to socialise over the winter period, when days are shorter and it's more difficult for some to leave the scheme.



(left to right) Local Housing Manager, Suzanne with Mayor of Oldham, Cllr Zahid Chauhan OBE and Anna Kennedy

Bowled Over

The 2024 annual bowling competition was held at the beginning of July at St George's Square, Chadderton. Residents attended in numbers and enjoyed a fantastic day of bowling, alongside Housing 21 employees and contractors. A selection of cakes, refreshments and sandwiches were served in between games, and the winners were presented with a trophy.

The winning pairs were as follows:

1st Place — Jack, Tandle View Court, and Phillip, Violet Hill Court.

Joint 2nd Place — Peter, Lynmouth Avenue, and Joan, Victoria Street.

Joint 2nd Place — Betty, St George's Square, and Dennis, Recreation Road.

3rd Place — Dave, Dynamic, and Denise, a local resident.



... Congratulations to all the winning pairs
... and thank you to everyone else who came
... along to compete.

The day wouldn't have been possible without the sponsorship and support from our contractors; thank you to Dynamic, Frontline, SPH, AGS, Vector Flooring and Alan Wood for their generous contributions towards the event.



Glorious Gardens

Every year, residents never fail to brighten up their neighbourhoods and people's lives with colourful displays of flowers and shrubs.

Thank you to everybody who entered the Housing 21 Annual Garden Competition for 2024. It was lovely to see both familiar and new faces in the competition, and it's incredible to witness the effort that residents go to in their gardens!

Thank you also to the judges, Caroline Lawson from Veg in the Park and Sharon Newman, a local Saddleworth resident who were given the very difficult task of picking the winners from each category.

Category	Winner	Runner up	Third place
Best Communal Garden	Old Mill House	Lido House	Violet Hill Court
Best Garden	Kevin and Tracey, Iris Street	Ruth, Cypress Avenue	Kim and Ann, Recreation Road
Best Pot/ Hanging Basket	Harry, Old Mill House	Elaine, School House Flats	
Best Grow Your Own	Mrs A Rudd and Mr J O'Connor, Violet Hill Court	David, Violet Hill Court	

The winners from each category were awarded a £50 gift voucher, second place received a £30 gift voucher, and third place received a £20 gift voucher.

Alongside this, they also received a certificate to mark their achievement and everyone who entered was invited to our annual resident conference.

Saddleworth in Bloom

In addition to winning our annual competition, residents of Old Mill House were successful in the Saddleworth in Bloom competition under both the 'Best Community Garden' and the 'Best Hanging Baskets and Pots' categories. To celebrate their accomplishments, the residents involved (Christine, Dorothy and Harry) were invited along to an award ceremony at the Uppermill Civic Centre.

From all at Housing 21, we would like to congratulate the residents of Old Mill House on their incredible achievements! Dianne, Local Housing Manager, praised the residents:

“The group have raised all their own money, along with a contribution from local councillors, to make sure the garden is immaculate! Their hard work has obviously paid off!”



Old Mill House residents celebrating their multiple awards

Fab Neighbour Awards

We had some fantastic entries for our Fab Neighbour Awards, and it was a hard task to pick just a handful of winners.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit a nomination, and a special thank you to all those who were nominated. Your contributions are truly valued and appreciated.

The winning entries

Elaine from School House was nominated by Patricia

“Despite her own health problems, Elaine is always helping neighbours whenever they need her and works hard in the garden buying and planting seeds. She also helps in the kitchen on coffee mornings, having previously gone out to get the provisions. Whenever we have a function, she always bakes something good as she is an excellent cook.”



Fab Neighbours



Maria from Springlees Court was nominated by Gail

“ Maria is a great neighbour and friend. She is always on hand to help people and offer a shoulder to cry on. Her door is always open for a chat, and you never go away empty handed. She is a very kind and considerate neighbour. Keep it up Maria, we all need a neighbour like you in our lives.”



Jack from Tandle View Court was nominated by Diane

“ I would like to nominate Jack as he is a number one man for me and others. He helps pleasantly with information as much as he can. He is very patient. He is a very friendly, helpful, caring person to all. Jack mixes well with people here and he keeps people going, laughing, and carrying on. Not only me but many more here are thankful for his loyalty and consideration. Just being himself and his personality makes me happy, cheerful and makes me smile. I would like to say a big thank you to Jack and I am sure a lot of others here would too.”

Fab Neighbours



Rodney from Lido House was nominated by Lydia and Pat

“ He is a very good neighbour and will help you with anything he can, shopping, making telephone calls or any other matter.” — Lydia

“ Rodney is a lovely neighbour who is always happy to lend a helping hand to everyone. Whether it's opening a bottle or jar, bringing something from the shops, or reaching something at the top of the wardrobe, Rodney is your go to man.” — Pat



Ruth from Cypress Avenue was nominated by Patricia

“ I have lived next door to Ruth for about five years now. Since I moved in, she has made me feel welcome and goes out of her way to do the same for all new neighbours. She does all of our communal gardens, making a beautiful space to enjoy and has always gone above and beyond for everyone here. I have had some health worries and Ruth has helped me. She has done so much for me and the other neighbours, she truly is a great neighbour.”

You Said, We're Doing

Here are some great examples of where we are listening and acting on feedback from residents.

LHM — Local Housing Manager

	Scheme	You Said	We're Doing
Spring 2024	Charles Morris House	Residents were struggling to understand the new boilers and thermostats and requested assistance.	The LHM organised for the contractor, Dynamic, to attend and deliver a demonstration as well as answer any questions that residents had.
	Hood Square	Residents had requested a new water butt for the communal garden.	The LHM arranged a site visit with the Neighbourhood Services Manager and a new water butt was agreed and installed.
	Lynmouth Avenue bungalows	A number of residents mentioned that the fences at the back of Iris Street were damaged and looked unsightly.	The LHM arranged for the contractor to replace the fences and gate posts as needed.
	Tandle View Court	Residents requested to hold more events and activities.	As a result, it was agreed that Tandle View Court would host a Summer Fair, multiple cheese and wine nights, and potato pie suppers.

	Scheme	You Said	We're Doing
Summer 2024	Charles Morris House	Residents were unhappy that they didn't have any soil to plant in the communal garden.	The LHM looked for funding opportunities and was able to order soil through a successful funding bid.
	Springlees Court	Several residents were having difficulty with opening the lounge and laundry doors with their keys.	The LHM spoke to the Repairs Team and a job was placed to install thumb locks on both doors.
	Tandle View Court	Residents requested raised planters in the communal garden and the facilities to listen to music in the communal lounge.	Raised planters were purchased and then assembled by one of the contractors, and an Alexa device was purchased.
Autumn 2024	Old Mill House and Hood Square	Some residents asked if it would be possible to buy a pool table out of resident funds as they would like to start meeting on a regular basis so they can have a chat and play pool.	The residents as a whole were consulted on this matter and agreed to purchase a pool table. The pool table is now in place in the first-floor lounge for everyone to enjoy.
	Springlees Court	Residents expressed their desire for the furniture in the communal lounge to be cleaned.	The LHM liaised with the Repairs Team and arranged for the furniture in the communal lounge to be cleaned.

	Scheme	You Said	We're Doing
Winter 2024	Charles Morris House	Residents were having difficulty accessing the mobility vehicle store due to cars blocking the entrance.	The LHM arranged for double yellow lines to be painted in front of the store room to deter cars from parking across it.
Spring 2025	Throstle Court	Residents wanted concrete edging to be removed from the communal garden so they could lay artificial grass.	A member of the Property Team attended to check if this was possible, and the edging has now been removed. Residents are really happy with the overall look of the garden.
	Violet Hill Court	Residents reported that some areas of the scheme needed jet washing.	The gardens, front entrance, and paths at Violet Hill Court have all now been jet washed.
	Old Mill House and Hood Square	Old Mill House and Hood Square residents were dissatisfied with the litter at the bus stop on Oldham Road and asked if the bin, which was there previously, could be returned.	LHMs liaised with the local councillor on the issue and the council agreed to relocate the bin nearer to the bus stop.

Resident Voice

Over the last year, we've carried out several mini makeovers at schemes, from updating furniture, changing carpets to brightening up spaces with decoration.

At every stage, we've involved residents in the decision-making process, gathering their feedback once work is completed and inviting them to attend sign-off meetings with contractors.

Interior designers and furniture providers have brought along mood boards, samples of material and items of furniture for residents to try out and give feedback on. Residents have been involved in picking the colour schemes and choosing the furniture.

Trinity House, Tandle View Court and Hopwood Court are just some of the schemes that have been updated.



Valerie and Mary from Cloughgate House trying out lounge chairs

Inset: Community Voice, Doreen with Nigel from Seddon Construction Ltd signing off internal decoration work

Fundraising Efforts by Residents

Every year residents arrange fundraisers for a variety of good causes.



Victoria Stitches, who meet regularly at Victoria Gardens in Shaw, held a weekly sewing group with a focus on creating hearts in honour of those who were lost in the 2017 Manchester bombing. The hearts are put around Manchester city centre, including Manchester Victoria Station, on the night before the anniversary for people to take home if they wish to. This is a beautiful tribute to those who were lost and a wonderful way to keep their memory alive.

Residents at St Herbert's Court supported Asda's Children in Need, 'Push for Pudsey' campaign.





Springlees and Dunsford Court held a Macmillan Coffee Morning with a wonderful selection of raffle prizes. In total they raised an amazing £604 for the charity.



Similarly, **Walton House** held a Macmillan Coffee Morning, raising over £1,300! Well done to all involved, and in particular to Ann who led the organising.



Residents at **School House Flats, Victoria Gardens, and the Holts Estate** were amongst those who collected presents for Oldham Council's Operation Christmas appeal. The presents were donated to children across the borough who may otherwise go without, and residents really got behind the cause to make a difference. Well done to all who got involved and thank you to the Local Housing Managers for helping to organise the efforts.



Before Christmas, residents at **Aster House** challenged themselves to collect presents for a family of seven between the ages of three and 16 as part of the Oldham Community Wardrobe appeal. They raised £70 through football cards and bought a variety of gifts, which they then wrapped for the children. Well done to all at Aster House who took part and thank you to the MioCare employees, Nicole from APM, and Lisa from Heather's Kitchen who all added to donations and helped to coordinate the effort!

Oldham Resident Conference

The Housing 21 Oldham Resident Conference was attended by our Community Voices, winners of the 'Fab Neighbour' competition, and both winners and runners up of the Housing 21 Annual Garden Competition.

Certificates were presented to each of the winners as well as to those who were recognised by the 'Royal Horticultural Society It's Your Neighbourhood North-West Britain in Bloom' competition. The event was a time to celebrate residents' achievements throughout the year and an opportunity to thank them for their contributions and support. Presentations were delivered from Housing 21 employees and representatives from Oldham Council.

Residents took part in three breakout sessions; a Citizens Advice energy quiz, a team activity with Oldham Council's Adult Social Care Team, and some games and gentle exercise with Deb from Re-Engage. And thank you to the Jolly Wheezers Choir who entertained everyone over lunch.

This year's event was even more memorable as it marked Housing 21's 60th anniversary as a housing association and 175 years of Oldham as a borough!



Want to stay connected throughout the year?

If you enjoy this report and want to see more content like this all year round, be sure to follow us on Housing 21's social media channels. We share resident stories, scheme events, organisational initiatives, and more!



Feedback

We hope you have enjoyed reading the Oldham Report 2024/2025. We'd love to hear your feedback and any suggestions you have for next year. Please get in touch by emailing **oldhamenquiries@housing21.org.uk** or speak to a member of the Housing 21 team.

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