



Streets Ahead

Summer 2019

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customers

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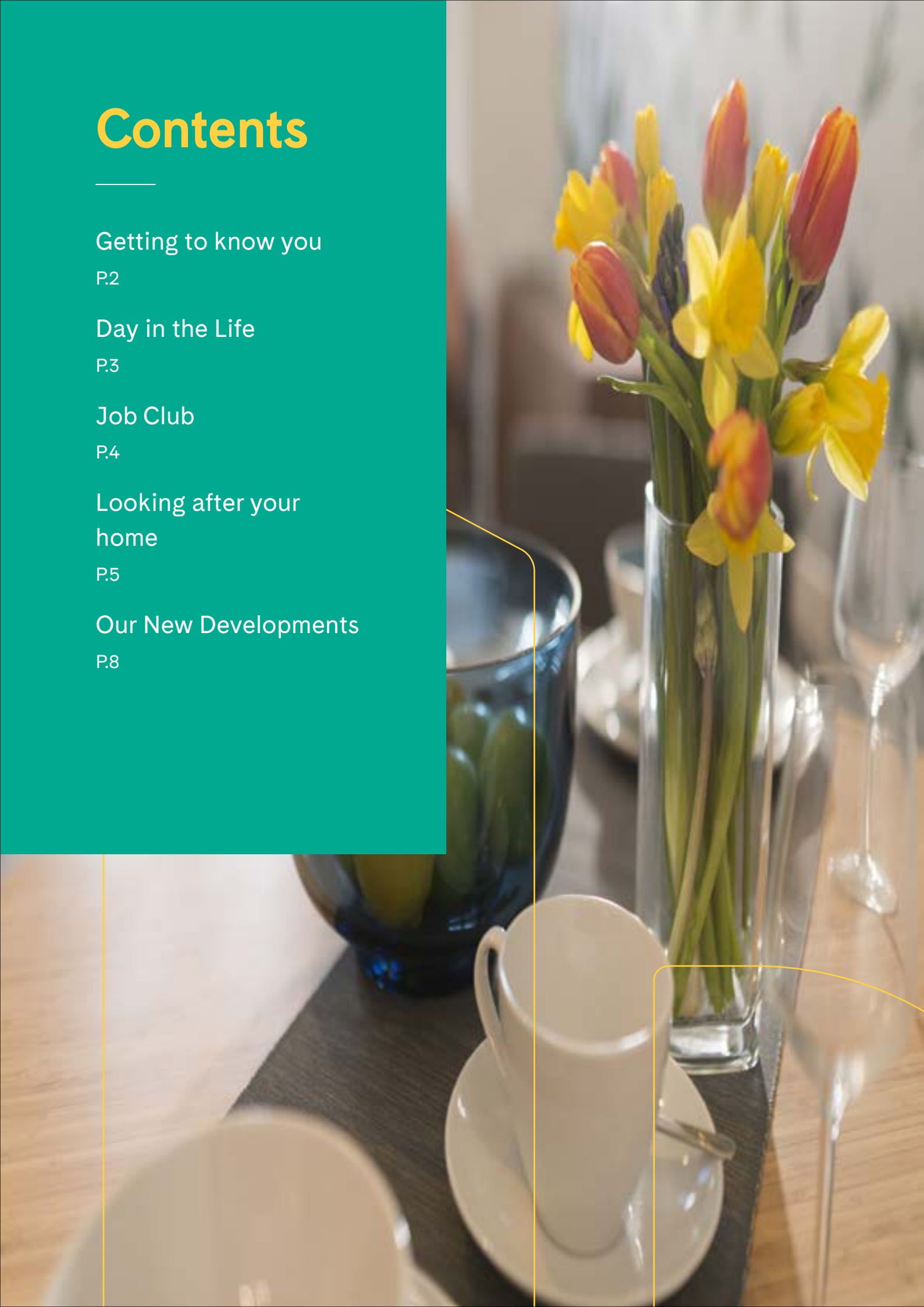
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Getting to Know You 2019



At the heart of everything we do is ensuring that our customers are happy, comfortable and satisfied with their homes. We continued with our annual customer Getting to Know You Event this year.

One of our main goals at Housing Solutions is to ensure that our customers are happy, proud and satisfied with their homes. There is no better way to check on customer confidence and monitor if we are focusing on your true needs, than to meet and chat with you face to face. So on Wednesday 19th June the Executive Team sponsored a “Getting to Know You” Event and most of our office based staff took to the streets of Slough, Reading, Wokingham, Aylesbury, Tadley, Wycombe, Taplow and Maidenhead.

80 colleagues from all departments across the business, partnered up and covered over 1,750 properties where we met many of our customers and gathered feedback on the interactions you have with us. We also wanted to encourage

our tenants to take advantage of our online services via our customer portal

<https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/portal-home/>

It was great to hear from some of your experiences with us with one customer commenting “When I need something, you are quick to help, and I receive helpful service.” Another customer said that they like where they live because “there’s open space, a lot of greenery, good parking spots and close school. Friendly neighbours too.”

We got to successfully meet 750 customers and the insights that were gathered will be used to refine and improve our services, ensuring all of our customers are proud of where they live.

Day in the Life of Lee Campbell

Community Service Manager - Sheltered Housing & Extra Care



“Despite what many people assume, it’s not all about Bingo and coffee mornings” Lee explains when we meet to discuss his new position at Housing Solutions as our Community Services Manager. “It’s important that we recognise that our customers value a ‘good life’ where they can enjoy and sustain interdependent relationships. We see our properties as communities where people look out for each other and can be involved as much or as little as they wish.”

Lee has always worked in a customer service environment, having left Scotland’s NE Morayshire coast at 19 he moved to London to pursue a career as a customer support specialist in Richmond. In early 2000 Lee started to work for the London Borough of Hillingdon as a Careline Officer. With his gentle Scottish accent, he was the reassuring voice at the end of the phone should anyone ever pull the emergency cord in their property!

It was this kind of support work that prompted Lee to want to take an active share in Community care, so in 2004 Lee relocated from London to Windsor. There he took up a role at Windsor Housing (now Radian) as a Resident Sheltered Housing Manager, where he lived on site at a 56 unit sheltered scheme. It was during his tenure at the scheme that he had day to day experience of the challenges and cumulative impact aging, bereavement and ill health can have. He saw first-hand the benefit of mutual help in community properties and how it brought companionship, support and fun. Lee then went onto become Assistant Supported Housing Manager within Radian, providing services for vulnerable adults.

In March of this year Lee joined us as our Community Services Manager Extra Care and Sheltered. Lee now oversees 11 sheltered properties which also includes 2 extra care properties. His day is split between undertaking management duties from Housing Solutions Head office in Maidenhead. However, he is not entirely office based and will often be on site to meet with customers and assist them with any questions or areas that they may need help in. Lee’s priority is to give our 55+ customers a community where they can live independently, without feeling constrained.

All our sheltered properties have a communal lobby, lounge, kitchen and gardens but the individual apartments have their

own front doors, bathrooms and kitchens as with any apartment building. However, there is a benefit of having neighbours of a similar age who can look out for each other and security afforded by a door entry system.

“We arrange lots of social events from theatre trips, to lunches out and crafting as well as informative sessions such as local school pupils helping with digital inclusion, but nobody is obligated to join in.” Lee finishes by saying how much he enjoys the diversity that his job brings. “It’s really important to me that our customers know that they are supported by a very capable and proactive team at Housing Solutions, so they can enjoy where they live.” If you would like more information about our over 55’s housing please take a look at our website:

<https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/supporting-you/sheltered-housing/>

Brill House Opening



We held the official opening of the new Brill House in Cox Green in the Spring. The redevelopment of the former over 55's sheltered living has been a culmination of five years work between Housing Solutions, RBWM, Feltham Construction and Katherine Allen Architects. The scheme was officially opened by Jeff & Margaret Brill whose family kindly gifted the land that the scheme sits on and Brill Green to the people of Cox Green over 50 years ago.

Need help getting into work? Join our Job Club!



Are you looking to get back into work, but need help with your CV, job searches or interview skills? Why not come along to our weekly job club?

Job club takes place every Wednesday between 10am - 12pm at the Housing Solutions Offices. The club is open to all Housing Solutions Residents and is a chance for you to:

- Job Search
- Create & update your CV
- Gain interview advice
- Enroll onto training opportunities
- Find out what benefits you maybe entitled to

There will also be help and advice from our Welfare & Support Team, National Careers Service and regular Job Club Volunteers.

Looking after your home

What is your responsibility?



As your Landlord we are responsible for repairs and maintenance of the exterior and the structure of the property, as well as the plumbing, wiring and central heating. However, customers share the responsibility for keeping the homes in a good state of repair over the life of the tenancy.

The law implies a condition within every tenancy agreement that the tenant must use their home in a 'tenant-like' way. A "tenant like way" dates to a court case of 1953 and still applies today (Warren v Keen) This means that, under case law, as the tenant you are expected to look after your property and carry out small jobs. So that means you are responsible for:

- Any repair caused by the neglect, misuse, wilful or accidental damage by a resident, or family, or their pets, or visitors to the property.
- Repair or replacement of any item not supplied or installed by Housing Solutions or gifted to the customer from Housing Solutions.
- Internal redecoration inc following a repair and minor plaster cracks of under 3 mm.
- Replacement light bulbs (except communal).
- Replacement of lost keys or a resultant change of locks to doors and windows.
- The repair or renewal of timber sheds/ outhouses and greenhouses.
- Pest control (affecting one property) Note: we can put you in touch with a trusted pest control specialist with discounted rates.
- Unblocking of sinks, baths and wash hand basins.
- Repair/replace sink, bath and wash hand basin plug and chain.
- External doors – bells, knockers, numbers and additional door security (except communal).
- Internal doors – Ease and adjust and replacement of handles, catches and locks.
- Repair/replace toilet seats, shower heads and hoses.
- Broken glass (if there is no crime reference number).
- Adjusting heating controls and programmers.
- Repair/replace washing lines (except communal).
- Replace kitchen unit handles, including ease and adjustment of doors and drawers.
- Replace outside catches or bolts (except communal).

Looking after your home

What is our responsibility?



Our aim is to provide our tenants with high quality housing where you enjoy living and as a registered social landlord, we have a duty to keep the homes in a good state of repair. Therefore, we are responsible for these repairs:

- The structure of the building including foundations, walls, windows, external doors, roofs, rainwater goods, chimney stacks, plaster, floors, stairs.
- The structural fittings and fixtures of the building including kitchen units, sanitary ware, internal joinery, cupboards and fireplaces.
- Service installations including drains, inspection chambers, wastes, water pipes, electrical installations, gas pipes, central heating, communal lights, fire alarms, warden call alarms, door entry phones, lifts, communal aerials.
- White goods supplied by Housing Solutions.
- External works including paths, fences, brick stores and communal clothes lines.
- Communal facilities of flats and sheltered schemes, including paths, drying areas, communal lounges, launderettes, hobbies rooms and bathrooms, paved areas, grassed areas.

- Pest control to multiple properties and common areas of flats and sheltered schemes.
- Unblocking toilets and external drains that are the responsibility of Housing Solutions.
- Providing a full home redecorating pack where a water leak (caused by faulty pipework) has resulted in repair work to a ceiling or wall.

As would be expected, we reserve the right to recharge customers for any works caused as a result of neglect, wilful damage or misuse (including accidental damage) by a customer, their family or their visitors. If you have any questions regarding maintenance or our rolling schedule of planned works please take a look at our webpage

<https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/rent-and-repairs/home-advice/planned-maintenance/>

Alternatively for a quick response in work hours please speak to one of advisors via Live Chat

Alexa - Open Housing Solutions and Report a Repair...

Everyday we take part in some kind of online transaction, whether it is online banking, to ordering take away. So we want your experience with us to be just as easy. Our IT team have been working on our latest innovation - a Housing Solutions Amazon Alexa Skill. This new skill will allow you to do all of the things you can do on our customer portal through your Alexa device. From reporting a repair and changing repair slots, to checking your rent balance and adding someone to your tenancy.

To get feedback on the skill from real customers we will be rolling out a trial to a number of our customers in the coming weeks. During the trial we will supply customers with the device, help to get them set up and be on hand to help with any issues.

If you would like to know more about the Alexa trial and would like us to add your name to the list then please visit our Facebook page to sign up.

www.facebook.co.uk/Housing.Solutions.UK



Zero Tolerance - Keeping you safe

Keeping you safe in your homes is our highest priority. You will have all recently received a letter outlining our new Zero Tolerance policy which explains that all communal areas must be kept completely clear of any items including door mats, prams, rubbish bags and plant pots etc. If you have any questions about this new policy please visit our website: <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/news-and-events/news/keeping-you-safe-in-your-home/>



Grounds & Caretaking Trial

Back in April we launched a trial grounds & caretaking service which saw the services you receive change. If you live in an area with a communal hall or stairwell your cleaning will have now increased to once per week, and certain areas grounds will have changed as the groundsmen will now be collecting the grass cuttings following their visit.

The Caretaking trial will be in place for a whole year from 1st April 2019 - 1st April 2020. The Grounds trial is in place for the summer months running from 1st April 2019 - 1st August 2019. Both trials are free to customers for the duration of the trial period to see how the service works. We will then consult with all customers later in the year to establish if this is a service you would like us to continue on a permanent basis. Should you have any questions or feedback on the trial so far please fill out the form here: <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/customer-information/neighbourhoods/grounds-maintenance-and-caretaking/>

Our New Developments

To help improve the shortage of housing locally, we are continually looking to build more homes for rent and shared ownership. We are committed to remaining local and aim to build 750 new homes locally.

Since 2014 we have delivered over 1,200 new homes and we have a further 500 homes in development. Here are just a few of the up and coming developments.



York Road, Maidenhead

88 new homes for affordable rent and shared ownership, construction has commenced on site and completion will be phased over the next two years.

Total Cost: £21million
Local Authority: RBWM



Pine Trees, Wycombe

A development of 30 new homes at Daws Hill, Wycombe. Originally, we had secured 50 houses but we are delighted to have secured another 43 affordable homes on this scheme to be constructed between 2019-2021.

Total Cost: £19.2million
Local Authority: Wycombe District Council
Developer: Taylor Wimpey



The Loftings, Maidenhead

A development of 23 one & two bedroom flats at Stafferton Way, Maidenhead. The development comprises of 23 flats for rent which have now completed. We have secured an additional 16 houses due for completion in Summer 2019.

Total Cost: £9.4million
Local Authority: RBWM
Developer: Redrow Homes



Wick Hill & Garth Hill, Bracknell

19 affordable rent and 18 shared ownership properties on the edge of the newly regenerated Bracknell town centre. This development is a mix of flats and three bed houses with expected completion by Autumn 2019-2020.

Total Cost: £8.4million
Local Authority: Bracknell Forest
Developer: Cala Homes

Streets Ahead Feedback

Win a £25 High Street Voucher

We are always looking for ways to improve your newsletter. So we are offering you the chance to win a £25 High Street Voucher in return for your feedback. All you have to do is answer these three questions on the survey here: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/L7YPCPD

1. Which article did you enjoy the most and why?
2. How can we improve our newsletter?
3. If you could change something about our newsletter, what would it be?



Opening times

Main office

Our offices are open:

Monday to Thursday:
8.45am to 5.15pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.45pm

Cash office

For the payment of rent,
our cash office is open:

Monday to Thursday:
8.45am to 4.45pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.15pm.

Or call 01628 543101 to use
our automated telephone
rent payment line.

Customer contact centre

Monday: 8.45am to 5.15pm

Tuesday: 8.45am to 5.15pm

Wednesday: 10am to 5.15pm

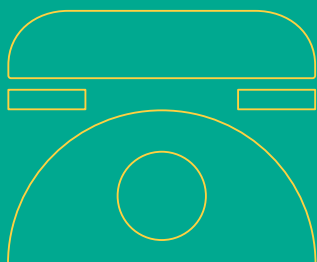
Thursday: 8.45am to 5.15pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.45pm

Get in touch

Streets Ahead is the newsletter for Housing Solutions customers. Don't forget that this is your newsletter, so if you have any suggestions for improvements or ideas for stories or local news, please let us know by dropping an email to:

pr@housingsolutions.co.uk or by calling Holly Price on 01628 543126.



Contact details

Email

contact@housingsolutions.co.uk

Website

www.housingsolutions.co.uk

Facebook

facebook.com/Housing.Solutions.UK

Twitter

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