

# grapevine

WINTER 2022

NEWSLETTER

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# Support with cost of living increases

[brunelcare.org.uk](https://brunelcare.org.uk)



brunelcare

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# welcome

## to Grapevine



**We have focussed this Grapevine issue on the cost of living again, as we know this remains a significant concern to you all.**

The answer to rising inflation and energy costs is outside our control, but we have tried to provide the advice and support we can. Please do not suffer in silence. We have a Financial Assistance fund, and if you talk to us, we can make arrangements about rent and service charge payments.

At the time of writing, the Government has not let us know how the £400 Energy Support Fund will be paid to you, but they have said it will be paid.

With temperatures dropping and people naturally wanting to limit their heating, there is always a difficult balance between heat

and ventilation, which means an increased risk of damp and mould occurring or getting worse in your home. Please tell us straight away if you see any damp as there are things we can do and it is very bad for your health to live in damp conditions.

After two very challenging years when we weren't able to get out and about as much as we would like, I have really enjoyed being able to come and talk to some of you and hear about some of the issues and the ways that you have often supported each other. Next year we plan to do even more of this through 'Together with Customers'. There will be different ways of hearing your feedback, whether it's about the energy crisis, rent levels, or repairs. So please put your name forward (page 3), as it is a vital part of making sure the housing service we provide is the standard you deserve. We want to increase the ways that you can help influence and shape the services you use and how they are delivered.

I wish you season's greetings and the very best for 2023.

**Oona Goldsworthy**  
CEO at Brunelcare

## Have your say

We would love to include news and stories from our customers in publications such as Grapevine.

If you have a story or would like to share news from your community with other customers, please get in

**Have you got a story to tell?**

touch with us. Use our 'Share your story' form on our website.

Go to our 'Share your story' page to complete the form at: [brunelcare.org.uk/share-your-story](https://brunelcare.org.uk/share-your-story)

# You said, we did

## Quarterly Site Meeting outcomes

### WE DID:

The pricing of the guest rooms has been reviewed, and the prices will drop to a flat fee of £10 per night starting January 2023.

### YOU SAID:

You would like to see CCTV installed on your site(s).

### WE DID:

We sourced the cost of installing a CCTV system, including cameras, onto the site(s) and then put these costs to customers, who voted on whether they accepted the additional expense on their service charge. Most customers have favoured accepting that you wanted the extra expense, and we are now installing CCTV systems on the sites requesting this service.

### YOU SAID:

You would like to see an increase in the presence of senior Brunelcare colleagues at site meetings.

### WE DID:

We have ensured that there is now a member of the Brunelcare Senior Leadership Team in attendance at all meetings.

### YOU SAID:

You had concerns over certain trees on your site, for example, with ash dieback.

### WE DID:

Brunelcare are working with Bristol City Council to manage these trees and follow guidelines on how to maintain and / or remove them.

### YOU SAID:

You would like to know why the guest room prices are so high.

## CUSTOMER SURVEY

We asked you what you thought of our housing services and your home a year ago. The results were published in the Spring Grapevine.

We are planning to repeat this early in 2023 with a shorter telephone survey. We will write to you closer to the date to let you know what to expect and ask you to participate.

## HOUSING

**TELL US  
WHAT  
YOU  
THINK**

**Together**   
with **Customers**

**Our Together with Customers plan details Brunelcare's commitment to putting our customers at the centre of its values, culture and ethos.**

We want to increase the ways that you can help influence and shape the services you use and how they are delivered.

We are setting up a new group called 'Customer First' that will link directly to the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees. This group will decide which services are the most important to concentrate on. This could include shaping how we can make a difference within our Net Zero Group or with the Repairs Service. It could also include writing or contributing to publications you read, such as Grapevine.

**If you would like to get involved, please let us know at your next QSM or get in touch:**

Visit our website:  
[www.brunelcare.org.uk](https://www.brunelcare.org.uk)

Email: [together@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:together@brunelcare.org.uk)

Call us on: **07557 568565**



# 2021-2022 Annual Report

Every year we publish our annual report to let our customers know what we are doing to deliver high-quality social care and housing services, as well as plans for the

future. It provides information about how we have performed and describes what we will do over the coming year to further improve to deliver a better service.

## HOW WE MANAGED YOUR FEEDBACK

# 107

Number of  
complaints  
received

Of the 107 Stage 1 complaints received, **88 (82%)** were acknowledged within **3 working days**.

**OUR RESPONSE  
TIMES IMPROVED**  
from

# 72.72%

in the period October to December 2021 to

# 94.44%

in the period July to September 2022.

# 81%

Customer satisfaction with overall housing services

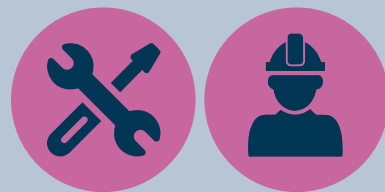
# 52

**COMPLIMENTS  
ABOUT THE  
SERVICES**

provided by Brunelcare and its employees were received. We are working to further improve the recording and reporting of compliments.

# 15%

**OF FORMAL  
COMPLAINTS  
RELATED TO REPAIRS  
AND MAINTENANCE.**



These included a number of complaints regarding planned works being undertaken by an external contractor.

### What we did:

Held weekly escalation meetings with the planned works contractor during November and December. A specialist company delivering surveying and project management services, was appointed to work with the planned works contractor to address quality and communication issues.

## HOW WE ARE SPENDING YOUR MONEY

As a Charity, we are focused on investing any surplus back into making us a quality provider and great employer.

Most of our expenditure is either for the direct provision of care (mainly staff costs) followed by the provision of suitable home environments (such as repairs and maintenance costs) plus funding of the relevant support services (for example, recruitment and training).

We compare our costs and performance to other older people housing providers to ensure that we deliver value for money and make progress toward our strategic objectives. You can find our value for money figures in full on the website.

This year the focus has been **recruitment and retention**. We simply wouldn't be able to provide our vital services without our



# 1,101

**strong workforce**

**In April 2022, we officially became a Living Wage Employer** guaranteeing every employer a starting rate of pay of at least £9.90 per hour.



We are the largest social care provider in Bristol to have achieved this so far.



We have also pushed ahead with an **ambitious programme of IT and digital transformation**. The single biggest project in this programme is the **replacement of our legacy housing management system**. This is a truly significant piece of work, both in terms of its scope and scale and its ability to improve the way we work, with more and better information at our fingertips.

**In 2021-22 we progressed with planned investment in our homes by:**

**Invested  
£1.6m**



replacing kitchens, bathroom heating and fire alarms, heating units, and smoke detectors.

**Spent  
£1.25m**



on fire safety including fire door replacement and alarm upgrade.

Put in place a plan to **improve the energy efficiency of all our homes to achieve EPC C** by 2030 and net zero by 2050.



Continued with the **fire door replacement programme**



Ensured that all homes met the **Decent Homes Standard**.



## KEEPING YOU SAFE AND SECURE



85%

of customers feel their home is safe and secure.



97%

of response repairs completed first time.



GOOD

or above in ECH CQC ratings

99%

Health and Safety Compliance



Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staffing and the ability of staff and contractors to access homes, as at 31 March 2022,

**there was 99% Compliance with all landlord health and safety requirements.**

This dropped slightly this year due to difficulties gaining access to three homes, however, all the outstanding items were completed

**shortly after the end of the year and we are back up to 100%**

## HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING YOU



1000

Sheltered homes



3

Extra Care Housing Schemes



1

Retirement Village

Brunelcare encourages tenant involvement in decision-making by promoting mechanisms for their involvement.

*How you ask?*

Here are 10 examples

**Brunelcare supports over 2,000 people**

to remain as independent as possible, in their communities.



Issue of an annual report to tenants



Customer satisfaction survey



Suggestion boxes in all sheltered sites



Site notice boards



Quarterly site meetings



Our Grapevine magazine



Information on our website



Repairs call back survey



Exit survey for departing tenants



Brunelcare Tenant Feedback Group

## WHAT'S NEXT



SCAN TO VIEW FULL REPORT

You can read the full report on our website: [www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/reports-publications/](http://www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/reports-publications/)

**Thank you to those customers who got involved with helping us with this years annual report and providing us with their views and feedback on what they wanted to see.**

Many customers took the opportunity to let us know

they would like to see a calendar produced as in previous years, which we would like to do in the future when budgets allow for this.

If you have any questions or feedback on the 2020/2021 annual report please let us know.



# Anti-social behaviour

## What is Anti-social behaviour?

**Anti-social behaviour is defined as 'behaviour by a person which causes or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to persons not of the same household as the person (Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 and Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011).**

### Our policy around anti-social behaviour:

Brunelcare takes a zero-tolerance approach towards anti-social behaviour and is committed to making our communities safe and peaceful. Our policy aims to set out a pathway to effectively manage anti-social behaviour, which aligns with our approach as a Charity, working with our customers and promoting tolerance to make our communities and neighbourhoods great places to live.

### Brunelcare will:

- 1 Ensure an effective response to complaints of anti-social behaviour.
- 2 Work in partnership with other key stakeholders as necessary, and use a broad range of legal and non-legal tools to support victims and deal with the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.
- 3 Act early to intervene and prevent anti-social behaviour from escalating.
- 4 Respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour from whatever source if it is alleged that our residents, members of their families, or visitors are perpetrators.

The following details some examples of anti-social behaviour that Brunelcare can investigate.

### LOW-LEVEL (no risk of immediate harm) anti-social behaviour:

- 1 Excessive noise which causes or is capable of generating a nuisance to others
- 2 Vandalism and damage to property
- 3 Nuisance from vehicles, including where vehicles are parked inconsiderately
- 4 Drugs/substance misuse
- 5 Loitering on the estate causing a nuisance to others, with or without alcohol or drugs.

### HIGH-LEVEL (genuine risk of immediate harm) anti-social behaviour:

- 1 Criminal behaviour
- 2 Threatening behaviour, including verbal abuse, threats of violence or targeting someone for a specific reason
- 3 Drug dealing
- 4 Fly-tipping
- 5 Noise, where the noise is frequently excessive in volume and duration or occurs at unreasonable hours, between 11 pm and 7 am

### URGENT LEVEL (genuine risk of immediate harm) anti-social behaviour:

- 1 Acts of physical violence, such as attacks on a person
- 2 Cannabis farms or factories
- 3 Domestic abuse or hate incidents
- 4 Presence of illegal weapons or explosive devices
- 5 Serious sexual offences

**Please note that there are a variety of things that Brunelcare will not investigate.**

For more information on our anti-social behaviour policy, please refer to our website: [brunelcare.org.uk/help/antisocial-behaviour](https://brunelcare.org.uk/help/antisocial-behaviour), where you will find a complete list of examples that Brunelcare will and will not investigate.

### How to report anti-social behaviour at your site:

In the first instance, customers will be encouraged to approach each other to resolve their problems where possible and safely. Where this is not possible, or the complainant does not feel comfortable doing so, there are several ways that anti-social behaviour can be reported:

- 1 In-person
- 2 By letter
- 3 By telephone
- 4 By email
- 5 Through Brunelcare's website

### To make an anti-social behaviour complaint, please contact:

**Lulu Harris** - Tenancy Officer (South)

**Email:** [lulu.harris@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:lulu.harris@brunelcare.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 07776 652758

**Bill Keywood** - Tenancy Officer (North)

**Email:** [elizabeth.keywood@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.keywood@brunelcare.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 07467 482886

Alternatively, please get in touch with the Housing Customer Service Team on **0117 914 4257**.

## Things you can do to help reduce condensation

- 1 Cover pans while you're cooking
- 2 Dry clothes outside where possible
- 3 Open your windows to let air circulate around your home, and move your furniture away from radiators and external walls.
- 4 Keep your heating on at a lower temperature for longer periods of time.
- 5 Use an extractor fan when cooking or in the shower/bath, and keep your kitchen and bathroom doors closed.

## Damp, condensation and mould

### The difference between damp & condensation

**Condensation** is caused by a combination of excess moisture in the air and poor ventilation and can start from something simple like boiling the kettle.

**Damp** occurs when a fault in the building's basic structure let's water in from the outside.

**Any dampness or mould in your home can seriously affect your health.**

**Please tell us straight away so we can investigate and take action.**

If you believe you are experiencing damp issues, please call **0800 072 6308** and a repairs inspector will attend to carry out an inspection.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on damp and condensation, please refer to our website:

[brunelcare.org.uk/help/damp-and-condensation](https://brunelcare.org.uk/help/damp-and-condensation)

## ENERGY CRISIS



Brunelcare has always provided energy to most of our customer's homes. This is partly because of the original design of the homes but also because Brunelcare could buy energy at a cheaper rate on the wholesale market. This year everything changed, and energy prices have quadrupled. The total price for Brunelcare rose from £1.5m per year to a staggering £7.7m! Fortunately, in September, the Government agreed to support charities and other businesses, which means that the price we will pay until March '23 is slightly lower than for people who have their own meters. However, it is still double what you will have paid last year. Government support is up to next March, and we

are lobbying strongly for this to continue beyond March 23. We wrote to all customers who are on variable tenancies in October to advise you about how this will affect you, and we have asked you to start paying this from Dec 1st. We could have delayed this until next April, but this would have meant your energy costs being even more expensive. Many of you have been shocked by the increase, and we understand this. **Please contact us if you are facing difficulties in paying your rent or energy costs**, as there are ways that we can help or make arrangements for payment plans.

At the time of writing, we have not yet been told how or when the £400 Energy Relief Fund will be paid out to you. However,

we have had assurance from the Government that it will be paid. As soon as we find out, we will let you know.

Our aim is for every customer to have their own gas and electricity meters so that you can manage your bills yourself. We have started talking to National Grid about how this can happen, but we know it will be a major cost and will mean disruption. The customer net zero group will be crucial in understanding what this might mean for customers. **Finally, we know that many of you are trying to reduce energy use, which will help reduce costs, but please do this safely and don't risk cold and dampness.**

# Cost of living

Where to go for help...

We recognise that the cost of living will remain tough to navigate over the coming months. Here are a few ways in which Brunelcare can help:

## Help When You Need It Support (HWYNI)

Our Help When You Need It team can support you to maximise your income, reduce any debt, help manage your money and financial affairs, help look for paid work and provide access to food banks.

**Tel:** 0117 428 1274

**Email:** hwynireferrals@brunelcare.org.uk

## Please get in touch with the Health and Wellbeing Team:

**Phone:** 0117 321 5551

**Email:** health.andwellbeing@brunelcare.org.uk

Brunelcare has created a Financial Support fund to support customers with financial hardship. For more information, please visit our website: [www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/help-and-guidance/financial-support-fund](http://www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/help-and-guidance/financial-support-fund)

For information and support with debt advice, please visit:

**Bristol Citizens Advice**

[www.bristolcab.org.uk](http://www.bristolcab.org.uk)

**Talking Money**

[www.talkingmoney.org.uk](http://www.talkingmoney.org.uk)

For more information on cost-of-living help and for a list of helpful support schemes currently running, please visit our website:

[www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/help-and-guidance/cost-of-living-help](http://www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/help-and-guidance/cost-of-living-help)

SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE



# Energy saving tips

## Energy Saving Advice for you.

**Making smarter choices and knowing how much things cost will help you run your home more efficiently. The choices you make now will impact your future bills, reducing them over the longer term.**

It can be hard to know which appliances cost the most to run, but it is essential to understand that every device plugged in continues to draw power from the mains adding to your energy bill.

For instance, a television left plugged in and on standby could cost you an additional £24.61 per year and a further £23.10 if you have a set-top box.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?



### In the kitchen

- ✓ Put lids on saucepans when cooking, and use the correct size cooking ring for your pan.
- ✓ Don't fill your kettle if you only make one cup of tea; only boil as much water as you need (It can cost 12p a time to boil a full kettle). Use the same principle if you cook vegetables on the hob; only use just enough water to keep your vegetables covered.



Avoid putting hot food in a fridge or a freezer, and let it cool first.



Keep your fridge at around 3°C to 5°C and save electricity by regularly defrosting your freezer.



Don't leave the fridge or freezer door open longer than you need.



### Plug sockets and lights



Energy-saving light bulbs last up to 10 times longer and cost less to run. Turn off the lights when you leave the room.



Try not to overcharge your mobile phone or laptop. Unplug the charger from the socket when the phone has fully charged.



At night, or when not in use, try switching off devices at the mains and not leaving them on standby.



### Water



Never leave taps running or even dripping.



Limit wash times in the shower to save water (to help the environment) and usage of the boiler (to save on cost). Ten minutes in an electric shower can cost 44p or more.



### Heating



Turn your heating down by 1°C, reducing energy use by 10%.



Keep your heaters clear, don't put anything in front or on top of them.



Block all draughts around the house to stop heat from escaping and use heavy curtains during the winter. Keep them drawn after dark.

## Centre for Sustainable Energy



**The Centre for Sustainable Energy has some valuable tips on keeping warm for less!**

The CSE's trained and independent energy advisors offer free advice on domestic energy use to households across Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Somerset.

They have many helpful energy-saving tips and great myth-busting pointers about energy across your home. Visit their website for more information:

[www.cse.org.uk/advice](http://www.cse.org.uk/advice)

You can also call them on **0800 082 2234**

## WELCOMING spaces

Our Extra Care Housing (ECH) sites: ABC Centre, Colliers Gardens and Waverley Gardens, have always been a part of the local community. A warm welcome, relaxing environment and the opportunity to engage in various activities, from coffee mornings and exercise to craft and music, seem more important than ever as many of us face difficulties with the cost of living increase.

We are joining many other groups and organisations as part of Bristol City Councils Welcoming Spaces initiative, offering a range of activities to suit any interest, access to low-cost meals and a space to relax and have a cuppa.

Please come along and make the most of the warm welcome and range of activities available.

To find out about a welcoming space near you, contact Emma.

**We are also looking for people to support us with our spaces. For more information on how to access our sites or to offer your time, please contact:**

**Emma Gwynne:**  
Community Engagement  
@ Volunteering Manager

**Email:** emma.gwynne@brunelcare.org.uk

**Telephone:** 07786 038058

**Danielle Morgan:**  
ECH Manager, ABC Centre

**Email:** danielle.morgan@brunelcare.org.uk

**Telephone:** 0117 958 6336

**Julie Walker:**  
ECH Manager,  
Colliers Gardens

**Email:** julie.walker@brunelcare.org.uk

**Telephone:** 0117 958 6336

**Laura Hartry:**  
ECH Manager,  
Wavereley Gardens

**Email:** laura.hartry@brunelcare.org.uk

**Telephone:** 0117 964 1888

**For more advice, Bristol City Council has set up a Cost of Living Support page on their website:**

[www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/people-and-communities/cost-of-living-support](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/people-and-communities/cost-of-living-support)



**SCAN ME**

TO VISIT THE BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL WEBSITE

**If you require further information or support, please contact the Help When You Need It (HWYNI) Team on:**

**Telephone:** 0117 428 1274

**Email:** hwynireferrals@brunelcare.org.uk



# COULD YOU BE A DIGITAL CHAMPION?

**Are you confident finding your way around a smartphone, laptop or tablet?**

Could you work with us to help your neighbours prepare for the launch of the customer portal?

No experience or knowledge is necessary, just a willingness to help your neighbour!

**FIND OUT MORE**



07786 038 058



emma.gwynne@brunelcare.org.uk



## The Noise App



### Simplify Noise Reporting and Investigation

The Noise App is an app that allows people to report noise nuisance to their local council, the police or the housing provider.

It can create an accurate record of noise nuisance and how it affects you.

Brunelcare is working with some of our customers to arrange a trial of the Noise App on some of our sites.

We look forward to updating you on how the trial has gone, if successful, we plan to implement the Noise App with our customers.



## DECARBONISATION FUND

UPDATE



In the last edition of Grapevine, we shared with you the news that we would be applying for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in the Autumn for the energy retrofit works.



**We are pleased to say that after a huge amount of time and energy being put into collating the data required, the application has been submitted and we will find out whether we are successful in the new year.**

We have also submitted an application for a community resilience fund offered by Bristol City Council through Bristol Older People's Forum; if successful, this will be utilised to upgrade incandescent/fluorescent/halogen light fittings to LED in communal areas across Sheltered Housing, Extra Care Housing and Care Homes, which will help to reduce energy costs. **Again, we find out about this in the new year.**

## Water safety

**Domestic hot and cold water systems can provide an environment where Legionella bacteria can grow.**

It is Brunelcare's responsibility to ensure that everything is working correctly, but we need you to tell us if you are experiencing any issues.

**Contact Brunelcare if:**

- ✓ The cold water is still running warm after initially running the tap

- ✓ There are any problems, debris or discolouration in the water
- ✓ The boiler or hot water tank is not working properly

**Showers:**

- ✓ If you only use your shower occasionally, flush them through once a week for two minutes, keeping out of the way whilst the water is running.
- ✓ Clean, descale and disinfect showerheads periodically.

If you have an issue with the water quality, you can contact the waterboard directly via their website: **[www.wessexwater.co.uk/report-a-problem](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk/report-a-problem)** and they will come out and test the water free of charge.

To report a repair to Brunelcare, please visit our website: **[www.brunelcare.org.uk/housing/tenant-services/report-a-repair](http://www.brunelcare.org.uk/housing/tenant-services/report-a-repair)**

Alternatively, please call the free phone number:

**0800 072 6308**  
Monday – Friday  
(8.30 am – 4.30 pm).



# MEET THE TEAM

There have been some changes to our housing team, and we wanted to take the opportunity to introduce all of our Housing Team colleagues to our customers; it's always great to put a face to a name!

**We would also like to extend a warm welcome to all of the new members of our Housing Team.**



**David Bull**

Tenancy Services Manager



**Hannah Browne**

Extra Care Housing Officer



**Emma Palmer-Givan**

Housing Team Manager (North)



**Karen Hislop**

Housing Advisor (North)



**Debra Holvey**

Income Officer (North)



**Tracy Parker**

Lettings and Allocations Officer (North)



**Bill Keywood**

Tenancy Officer (North)



**Laura Rogers**

Housing Team Manager (South)



**Maxine Williams**

Housing Advisor (South)



**Lisa Parry**

Income Officer (South)



**Lulu Harris**

Tenancy Officer (South)



**Charley Butcher-Wood**

Lettings and Allocations Officer (South)



**Jayne Hunsinger**

Customer Service Manager



**Suzanne Webb**

Senior Customer Service Officer



**Nancy Aldridge**

Customer Service Officer



**Keeley Frail**

Customer Service Officer



**Elfyn Griffith**

Temporary Customer Service Officer



**Elizabeth Phillips**

Temporary Customer Service Officer



**Femi Robinson**

Support Services Manager



**Janice Clements**

Housing Support Coordinator



**Daniel Mansie**

Health and Wellbeing Officer



**Zoe Gibbs**

Health and Wellbeing Officer



**Nikki Kurylo**

Health and Wellbeing Officer

## Customer Service Team

**Telephone:** 0117 914 4257

**Email:** customer.service@brunelcare.org.uk



Housing Team



Customer Services Team



Help When You Need It Team

## Allowing access for health and safety visits

Brunelcare has a legal obligation to ensure that all required safety checks in your home are carried out in a timely manner.

Providing us with access for these safety checks is extremely important in keeping both you and your neighbours safe at all times. It is therefore very important that you provide us with access when requested.

In the first instance, our contractors, who will carry out these checks on behalf of Brunelcare, will contact you by phone or letter to arrange an appointment. If the contractor has not been able to get hold of you, they will let Brunelcare know and we will then contact you by phone and letter.

**For more information, please contact:**

**Stacey McDonald**  
Compliance Manager

**Email:** stacey.mcdonald@brunelcare.org.uk

**Telephone:** 07990 003651

## National Housing Federation (NHF) Contents Insurance

### Have you got Home Contents Insurance?

Brunelcare is responsible for the insurance on the structure of your home, but your contents (i.e. your belongings) are not insured as part of your tenancy agreement.

Contents insurance is designed to help protect your possessions. No matter how careful you are, there's always a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen, so contents insurance can help provide peace of mind.

To help you decide whether contents insurance is right for you, Brunelcare has been in touch with My Home Contents Insurance which can provide specialist tenant content

insurance policies. They are the National Housing Federation's preferred supplier.

This home contents insurance scheme can offer you insurance for the contents of your home, including cover for items such as furniture, carpets, clothes, bedding, electrical items, jewellery and ornaments. The insurance also covers the replacement of external locks if your keys are lost or stolen and the contents of your fridge and freezer.

### How do I get further information?

**Call:** 0345 450 7288

**Email:** myhome@thistleinsurance.co.uk

Alternatively, visit [www.thistlemyhome.co.uk](http://www.thistlemyhome.co.uk)

**NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION**

**My Home**  
Contents Insurance

## Housing Management IT System

Back in the Spring edition of Grapevine, we let you know about the project to replace some of our old IT systems with a modern solution that will allow us to deliver a better service to our customers and improve their experience.

Our old housing management IT system needed replacing so that our colleagues can work more efficiently and effectively.

This new system will streamline processes by integrating systems and reducing the emails and

spreadsheets used to manage customer data and contractor works.

We are now pleased to announce that after several months of hard work from colleagues across Brunelcare, the housing management IT system will be 'going live' this month (December 2022).

The Housing and Property team are undergoing training to ensure that everyone can use the new system and increase our ability to help customers answer questions or queries about their tenancy or where they live.

It is hoped that by April/May 2023, we will have launched our Customer Portal. This will allow customers living in Sheltered

Housing or Extra Care Housing to access the information we hold, in addition to allowing them to see rent statements, rent history, repairs history and lots of other documents that are relevant to customers whilst living in a Brunelcare home.

### What's next?

We will keep you updated on our new housing management system's progress and will ask customers to help us test these new systems.

### Do you have any questions?

Ask them by emailing [hello@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:hello@brunelcare.org.uk) or contact your site manager.



## Colliers Gardens

Our wonderful tenant Annie has created a memorial piece to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II.

The piece, presented in two large frames, includes photos of the Queen throughout her life, a book of Paddington at the palace, stamps, coins, and handwritten poems by Annie, who enjoys poetry as a hobby and wanted to include poems within the piece.

Annie created the piece for tenants at Colliers Gardens to enjoy and said: *"There's not anything on the walls about the Queen, and many tenants would have lived through her entire reign. They would have remembered King George VI. I thought this was something nice to do for them, and I'm excited for them to see it."*

The piece will be displayed in the communal area at Colliers Gardens for tenants and colleagues to enjoy, and pictures of the piece will be sent to Buckingham Palace.



At the end of November, we welcomed some lovely HSBC volunteers to help us decorate our beautiful Christmas trees, which look stunning. It certainly has put us all in a festive spirit and sets the backdrop nicely for all of our fabulous Christmas plans!

## ABC

We welcomed some corporate volunteers from Scottish Widows to the ABC Centre in October. They spent quality time with our tenants and helped us revamp some of our garden furniture.

We also welcomed Bristol Dementia Action Alliance, who held a dementia awareness session for our tenants, colleagues, family, friends and the local community. This session provided those in attendance to develop an

awareness of dementia, learn to recognise symptoms and learn how to support those living with dementia.

Sight Support West now holds a monthly group at the ABC Centre. These sessions occur on the second Monday of every month from 2pm - 4pm and are led by a Sight Loss Advisor.

Our Halloween party was a great success, and we are now looking forward to all the festive activities we have booked for December, including ABC's Got Talent!

## Waverley Gardens

We have recently enjoyed some fabulous celebrations here at Waverley Gardens, including Bonfire night and Halloween! It was great to see everyone dressed up and in the party spirit.

We hosted a successful recruitment event in November. It allowed potential candidates to tour Waverley Gardens and meet some of the team and tenants. A big thank you to everyone who supported us on the day.

Our December line-up is looking very busy already. We are looking forward to

some fantastic celebrations and activities, including a Winter Tea Party at Bristol University, wreath making and Christmas flower arranging, a trip to the pub for a delicious Christmas lunch, carols, mince pies and mulled wine, and our celebrations wouldn't be complete without the Waverley Gardens Christmas Panto!



## RETIREMENT VILLAGE

### Woodland Court

Some of our lovely residents enjoyed a fabulous night of hotdogs, hamburgers and fireworks to celebrate bonfire night!

We look forward to celebrating the festive season in December, with many fun activities planned, including our Christmas Party.



# Mutual Exchange



## What is Mutual Exchange?

A mutual exchange is a home swap between two (or more) social housing customers. It can happen for many reasons, such as needing more (or less) space, moving for work or being closer to family. It's an excellent option for social housing customers who cannot access it or want to do something other than wait for the normal allocation process. It gives you more control and means you can choose a home that suits your needs better in the place you want to live.

## Can I swap my home?

You will need to be a social housing tenant with a secure or assured tenancy to have the right to a mutual exchange. You probably will not be allowed to swap if you have a starter tenancy or a demotion order. If you are still deciding, it's always a good idea to get in touch with us to find out what type of tenancy you have and if you're allowed to swap before you start looking.

It's important to remember that you won't be able to swap with a private housing tenant

- both homes need to be social housing properties.

In addition, permission must be obtained from Brunelcare and the other Landlord before any move can occur.

## Do I have to swap in my local area?

You can swap homes with any other council or Housing Association tenant that lives anywhere in England, so your swap can be outside the area managed by Brunelcare. All social housing landlords must allow mutual exchanges.

## How do I find someone to swap with?

You will need to register on the HomeSwapper website: [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)

Once you have found a suitable exchange partner, contact Brunelcare to begin the process.

## Extra Information

- 1 You will need to arrange viewings between yourself and your exchange partner.
- 2 All parties must complete two (or more) application forms - one from Brunelcare and one for any other landlord involved.
- 3 If you want to move home, a mutual exchange can be

a great route which can provide more options. For example, you may require a ground floor flat for mobility, or prefer a first or second floor flat. There could also be an opportunity to swap with another tenant on the same site or another of Brunelcare sites.

- 4 You can make agreements between exchange partners to leave items at the property, such as flooring, blinds, etc.
- 5 The process for completing a mutual exchange will take time; it takes a lot of work.
- 6 Permission for an exchange may be refused, there are various reasons why an application could be denied.

**If you would like more information or support regarding a mutual exchange, or are interested in making a mutual exchange, please contact our Customer Service Team, who will be happy to point you in the right direction. Alternatively, you can speak to your Tenancy Officer.**

**T:** 0117 914 4200  
**E:** [hello@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:hello@brunelcare.org.uk)



# Tenants Photography Competition

## the results

The results are in, and we are happy to share with you the winners of this year's annual Tenants Photography Competition.

Our sites could enter four categories this year; Celebration, Sports and games, A day in the life and Wildlife.

### Get involved

Would you like to get involved with our Tenants Photography competition in 2023?

Perhaps you would like to have a say on what categories to include, take part in judging or provide fellow photographers with some hints and tips.

Please visit our website: [brunelcare.org.uk/contact-us](http://brunelcare.org.uk/contact-us)

E: [hello@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:hello@brunelcare.org.uk)  
T: 0117 914 4200

### Congratulations to you all!

Your certificates and vouchers will be with you soon.

#### Celebration



##### Winner:

Sally Frampton

2nd - Roger Frampton

#### Sports and games



##### Winner:

Roger Frampton

2nd - Peter Cullen  
3rd - Sally Frampton

#### A day in the life



##### Winner:

Roger Frampton

2nd - Janet Cruickshank  
3rd - Sally Frampton

#### Wildlife



##### Winner:

Catherine Payne

2nd - Desmond Sweet  
3rd - Peter Cullen

# Warming vegetable soup

## with cheesy toasts

### Ingredients:

- 1 leek, chopped quite small
- 2 carrots, chopped quite small
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 potato, chopped quite small
- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh rosemary
- ½ tsp sugar
- 410g can chickpea, drained and rinsed
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 2 x cans chopped Italian tomato
- 425ml ¾ pint vegetable stock

### For the toasts

- 8 slices of baguette, cut on the diagonal
- 1 garlic clove, cut in half
- 50g edam, finely grated

### Method:

1. Put the vegetables into a large saucepan with the garlic, rosemary, stock and sugar. Season well, stir, bring to a simmer and cover. Cook gently for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are just tender.
2. Preheat the grill to high. Whizz the tomatoes in a food processor or blender until smooth, then tip into the vegetables with the chickpeas and parsley. Gently heat through, stirring now and then.
3. For the toasts: rub both sides of the bread with the garlic. Grill on one side until golden, turn the bread over, cover with edam and grill until it's bubbling. Serve at once with the piping hot soup.



Recipe from BBC Good Food:

[www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipesautumn-vegetable-soup-cheesy-toasts](http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipesautumn-vegetable-soup-cheesy-toasts)

### Sudoku

				2				
8		2	1					
	7			4				1
	3	7		8			4	2
		1				8		
4		8	7	1	2	5		9
3	8	9	4				5	
7								
6			2			3		4

Answers - no cheating, cover me up

7	4	5	8	6	2	5	1	9
8	1	6	5	9	7	2	4	
9	5	2	1	4	7	6	8	3
6	5	2	1	4	8	9	7	
4	9	8	7	5	1	6	2	
2	7	1	9	8	6	4	5	
1	2	9	5	7	8	3	4	6
5	6	7	4	9	1	2	5	8
5	8	4	6	2	5	9	7	1

### Wordsearch

D	N	B	C	E	N	G	L	S	E	M	E	M	Y
Y	E	E	N	V	O	I	B	O	Y	M	T	Y	T
H	S	E	R	L	E	V	E	S	T	G	U	Y	E
C	H	S	D	L	L	S	G	L	E	L	D	T	R
N	I	E	U	A	E	N	V	Y	L	R	C	S	R
U	N	A	R	A	A	E	C	I	R	Z	O	O	E
R	U	S	R	A	V	L	H	A	M	Y	O	R	B
C	L	O	E	E	E	C	R	E	U	S	U	F	M
R	N	N	A	T	S	R	L	S	N	T	C	N	E
R	Y	H	Z	I	E	F	O	R	G	E	U	N	V
E	Y	A	Y	B	R	E	E	Z	Y	B	R	M	O
U	Y	L	H	A	R	V	E	S	T	T	N	N	N
V	R	Y	Y	C	E	H	O	A	S	E	R	D	H
H	A	R	E	D	S	L	E	A	S	L	E	N	S

Tick the word when you find them!

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> AUTUMN | <input type="radio"/> NOVEMBER |
| <input type="radio"/> FROSTY | <input type="radio"/> HARVEST  |
| <input type="radio"/> GOLDEN | <input type="radio"/> LEAVES   |
| <input type="radio"/> SEASON | <input type="radio"/> CRUNCHY  |
| <input type="radio"/> CHILL  | <input type="radio"/> BREEZY   |



# Focus

## COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

As part of our Together with Customers Charter Communication Commitments we said we will:

- ✓ Provide information and updates in a clear and accessible format in a way to suit our customers
- ✓ Ensure updates are timely and relevant
- ✓ Ensure communication is two-way: customers should be able to share their views and know we are listening

We would like you to help us complete a communications review, so we can gain a better understanding of what and how you would like to receive communications from us.

**Please fill out the form on the right and return to us at your convenience. There are many ways you can do this:**

- At your next quarterly site meeting
- Email
- Online
- Telephone
- On-site suggestion boxes

You'll also get the chance to provide us with more feedback in the upcoming customer satisfaction survey at the beginning of 2023.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### How would you like to hear from us?

- ☐ Letter
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Text
- ☐ In person

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Do you require a different format?

- ☐ Large font
- ☐ Braille
- ☐ Easy-read
- ☐ Audio
- ☐ Translation

If you ticked translation what language? \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### What would you like to hear from us about?

- ☐ Your home
- ☐ Your Community
- ☐ Brunelcare decisions
- ☐ Complaints outcomes
- ☐ Brunelcare Events

### What type of digital access do you have?

- ☐ Smart phone
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Desktop
- ☐ Tablet (iPad)
- ☐ None

### Do you have internet access/ wifi in your home?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

### How would you describe your level of digital expertise?

- ☐ Basic
- ☐ Competent
- ☐ Very competent
- ☐ None

### If it was available would you be interested in support to use your device?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

## How to Contact Us

Head Office  
Brunelcare Saffron Gardens  
Prospect Place  
Whitehall  
Bristol  
BS5 9FF

Tel: 0117 914 4200  
Email: [hello@brunelcare.org.uk](mailto:hello@brunelcare.org.uk)

[www.brunelcare.org.uk](http://www.brunelcare.org.uk)



**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Standard

Registered as a charity (201555) and  
Regulator of Social Housing (LH0269)

### Housing Customer Services Team:

0117 914 4257

### Emergency Maintenance Freephone:

(Extra Care Housing & Sheltered Housing)

0800 072 6308  
(8:30am - 4:30pm)

**brunelcare** 