

InTouch

Issue 47 Summer 2021



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Plymouth
Community Homes



WELCOME

This year, more than most, has taught us that our environment is really important.

We've all been spending lots of time at home or close to home, maybe getting to know places we once took for granted.

How many of us have discovered new places on local walks rather than venturing further afield?

When people talk about 'environmental issues', they often think saving the whales, icebergs and Greta Thunberg.

But our environment is also what exists around our immediate surroundings – and how we can improve it in the here and now.

At PCH, we're all about improving lives and communities and that starts with ensuring we look after our neighbourhoods.

With that in mind, we've dedicated this issue to our environment – and the people who are making it better for all of us.

We announce the winners of our Lockdown Legends competition, those inspirational people who've put others before themselves during the pandemic.

Winners and highly commended include those who've carried out litter picks and diverted hundreds of items from landfill. You can read their stories throughout the pages of this issue.

We've an interview with El Clarke, from Clean our Patch, a growing organisation which has carried out hundreds of litter picks in Plymouth. You'll be amazed by what they've found!

Flytipping is, sadly, an ongoing problem and you can see the sort of things we could be spending your money on instead if we weren't dealing with dumped rubbish – training, fun days and paint being just a few examples.

There's an update on our Tamara Partnership project, which aims to see us work with people living in the Tamar Valley to improve the area, surely one of the most stunning in our region.

You can also read all about our tree team and how they've been busy planting dozens of trees around the city – and how you can get involved with their upkeep.

And last but not least, I'm pleased to confirm that PCH has been awarded an Investors in People (IIP) Gold award for a second time.



Nick

Nick Lewis, Chair of the Board



A business which opened in a rejuvenated part of the city has enjoyed phenomenal success in its first few months of trading.

The Rise Bakery, in Frankfort Gate, sold out of bread in its opening weekend and continues to see demand for its sweet and savoury treats.

The Rise owner, Lloyd Inwood – who also runs the The Terrace restaurant on Plymouth's Hoe – made a conscious decision to open his new business in the West End of town thanks in part to our regeneration of the area.

As well as owning a number of commercial premises in and around Frankfort Gate, we also own the residential flats above the retail units.

Over the past few months, we have replaced the concrete walls on the side of the residential blocks with contemporary panels and we will be carrying out more works in the coming months.

Plymouth City Council and the City Centre Company have also revamped Frankfort Gate to attract more visitors into Plymouth once Covid restrictions ease.

Work has included adding LED strip lighting around trees, refurbished seating, extra planting, new street lighting and power points for events.

The footbridge over Western Approach has been demolished and there are plans for a play area in Frankfort Gate. Planting and other environmental work has also been carried out in Market Avenue and Cornwall Street.

Chloe Winslet, Head of Marketing at The Rise, said: "We are all local to Plymouth and Cornwall and we grew up watching changes around the city centre especially the West End. We all want to build a local community down here. We can see the changes already.

"We've heard lots of changes are going to be coming to Frankfort Gate. The play area that's being planned will be exciting. It will bring more families down to this area and make it a nice place to shop and relax with children.

"There are lots of flats near here and if they're in walking distance, we're in a good location for them. It's perfect for people to pop in and get a coffee or breakfast or lunch.

"We sold out of everything for the first three days. It was our soft launch so we were trialling products. We had to close down for five days and expand our production unit in Saltash to meet demand.

"We also hate waste. We either reduce the price or give it to Shekinah or the Soup Run."

Their cronuts are flying off the shelves and their signature lines are sourdough breads – white bloomers and red onion and cheese ones. Also popular are their pasties, both steak and vegan.

Rise does deliveries and hopes to eventually expand into other venues in Cornwall and Devon.

Frankfort Gate improvements

There are a number of other improvements we're making to Frankfort Gate over the coming months.

We plan to install replacement handrails to communal walkways, improve site drainage, carry out essential building repairs and remove redundant fixtures and fittings.

Other plans to make residents feel safer in their homes include replacing the communal entrance doors with new secure aluminium security doors.

Ian Frazer, Head of Asset Management said: "It's important for us to invest in the independent quarter of the city and we hope that this new look will help bring further trade to businesses in the vicinity.

"These works are just the start for the West End area. We will be moving up through the Harwell Centre, Harwell Court and Morley Court later this year and hope to consult with residents once we have developed the works package to a more mature stage."

The Frankfort Gate project is part of a city-wide £7m investment by us into projects that will improve buildings and breathe new life into neighbourhoods throughout the city.

Ian added: "We want to invest in our city to make sure we create and encourage thriving communities. That requires continued investment in both our homes and shops. That's the commitment we've made to people living in our homes or running shops that we own and to Plymouth as a city."

BAKERY

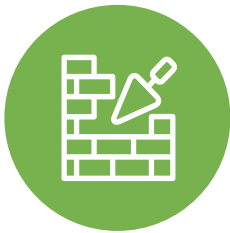
As In Touch went to print, the government had just announced there would be a delay to the easing of lockdown until 19 July at the earliest.

Our services are gradually beginning to resume. Please see our traffic light guide below which explains the current state of our services.

Services continuing

Services with some changes

Services paused



External repairs wherever possible



Requesting a future repair



Safety checks in residents' homes and buildings



Flytipping removal and clearances



Outdoor environmental services



Stairwell cleaning



Laundries will remain open with social distancing in place



Outdoor playgrounds remain open



Routine repairs



Resident led events in PCH buildings to resume



The Beacon will be open to the public



Community rooms will be open



Any routine in person home visits can take place



Community activities will begin indoors with the rule of 6 applying



Allocations, lettings, mutual exchanges and sales will continue



Kitchen and bathroom renewals in occupied properties



Plumer House will be open for scheduled meetings



Our City Centre shop will be open for appointments only



Housing, Leasehold and Income Officer visits - contact to be over the phone or virtually where possible



Communal lounges in sheltered housing schemes gradually starting to reopen

For the most up to date information, please go to our website: www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or see our Facebook and Twitter pages.

DO YOU NEED HELP READING OUR WEBSITE?

We want to make sure that the information we provide is easily accessible and inclusive of different needs.

That's why we've added BrowseAloud to our website - a free-to-use tool that reads aloud the content.

As well as providing speech, it can also translate text to another language with a choice of different reading speeds and highlighters to enhance understanding.

There's also the option to simplify the pages or convert content into audio versions for easy offline listening.

To use BrowseAloud, click on the orange headphone icon found in the Accessibility tab. This can be accessed in the top navigation of the website when viewing on a desktop, or through the Menu button when viewing on a mobile device.

Hover over the text you want read aloud and BrowseAloud will read it to you. Other features can be accessed by clicking on the icons within the toolbar.

BrowseAloud joins more accessibility tools already on the website including options to change the text size, contrast and language. The new feature will also be added to MyPCH shortly.



HELP US WATER YOUR TREES

We're asking residents to help care for new trees which have been planted around the city.

Our three-person strong tree team has been planting trees across the city as part of our annual tree planting programme.

More than 60 trees have been planted so far. This includes those planted by Plymouth City Council on our land as part of their Plan for Trees programme.

This year, we're asking residents to get involved with looking after the trees – and we're giving them the help they need to get started.

Each tree will have a sustainable tag on it explaining how to care for it. We've also developed a Google Maps web page which shows where new trees are located.

Clicking on an icon of each tree reveals further information about the tree including its species.

Species we've planted include Lime, Beech, Oak, Hawthorn, Birch, Poplar, Apple and Sweet Chestnut.



Arboriculturalist Joe Berryman and team explain why trees are so important to a city like Plymouth and how you can get involved in their upkeep.

“Trees are massively beneficial to those of us living in cities. Apart from adding beauty and hiding the concrete and tarmac that surround us, they are beneficial to our health and wellbeing and make living within cities a more pleasant experience.

These include providing shade in summertime, reducing the effect of the wind in winter, decreasing erosion and flooding, mitigating pollution, giving food and shelter to wildlife, and reducing psychological stress – something which is increasing for city dwellers.

As some trees eventually have to be taken down due to ill health, it's important that we plant new ones and have a continuity of mature trees. As a partner in Plymouth's Plan for Trees, PCH is helping to plant and nurture new trees on our land across the city.

In the past year over 1,000 trees have been planted and there are more to be planted in the coming years. Around 60 of these are on our land and so we are helping to look after them.

We have also created a map of these new trees, which we have made accessible for you to search for any growing near your home:

TINYURL.COM/PCHNEWTREESMAP.

Of course, all these trees need care for a number of years after planting to help grow into strong specimens, which means regular watering is needed in dry periods. With so many trees it can be a daunting task for the three tree team members so we are asking for help.

It takes a number of years for a tree to be fully independent. After care involves watering and adjusting the sticks and ties that support them. We put mulch or woodchip around the base and that needs to be turned over. You can even use dish water or bath water to water the trees.

If people feel involved and know where the trees are, they can take some ownership. We'd like people to become guardians of the trees. From emptying a water bottle as you pass by to setting up a community watering group or becoming a tree warden – we'd love your help!

While out and about on the sites we look after, carrying out tree works and surveying, we see areas that are looking bare of tree cover, and consider what species of tree might work here.

We consider things like the site's light, soil and wind conditions, what other species grow in the area, and the space available to plant trees. This information helps us in our planning.

We'd also like to hear your feedback – what trees would you like to see and where? ”

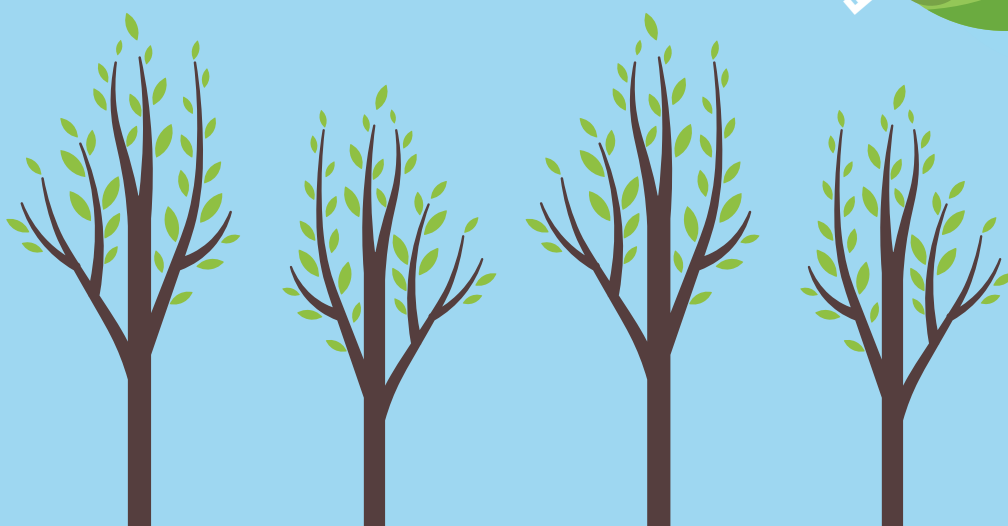
If you can lend a hand in any way, email EnvironmentalServices@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or call 0808 230 6500.



If you are interested in learning more about Plymouth's treescape, here are some useful links:

[www.plymouth.gov.uk/
planningandbuildingcontrol/
treesandhedges/plantrees](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/treesandhedges/plantrees)

www.plymouthtrees.org



Hearts of gold



Residents at the Towers have been doing their bit for charities locally and nationally these last few months.

Dogs up and down the land will be keeping cosy thanks to the handiwork of John Fox.

John, of Tavy House, has spent most of lockdown crocheting blankets to keep busy.

He's sent about 20 of them to Battersea Dogs and Cats Home and now the animal charity has sent him a thank you letter for his efforts.

They hailed his blankets as an 'invaluable source of comfort' for the four-legged friends.

John said: "My wife wanted to send money to the dogs' home but it was a bit much so we thought the next best thing was to send some blankets. They are always asking for them. They were grateful for them and it was lovely to receive the thank you letter.

"I've also crocheted some for cats, the scaffolders at the Towers and for my wife."

It takes around three hours for John to complete a blanket from start to finish and rainbows are one of the themes he uses a lot in his designs.

John and his wife Leanne used to attend the crafting club and carried on during lockdown. He even taught other members of the club how to crochet.

Lockdown was particularly tough for Lynher House resident Chrissie Hine. She's spent most of the past year confined to her flat due to health problems.



So she decided to celebrate her birthday at the beginning of May by doing something really memorable – and beneficial for charity.

Chrissie, who normally has shoulder-length hair, had it all shaved off to raise cash for Help for the Homeless SW.

She said: "My last birthday was in lockdown so I thought I'd do something to remember for this one.

"My hair was really long because I'd not had it cut during lockdown. I was getting fed up with it.

"I'd thought about going that short before but never been brave enough. There's nothing brave about it.

"I'm going to keep it quite short. I stroke it every so often like I stroke my cat! My daughter and son-in-law bought me some turbans for my birthday and I bought two wigs but it gets hot under there - I don't use them.

"I thought it was a good thing to do and they needed the money. I raised more than I thought I would - £1,312."



Community care

People's thoughts about lockdown will be forever remembered thanks to the handiwork of city centre residents.

Visitors to the Unitarian Church café in Notte Street – many of whom include PCH residents – have spent much of lockdown creating a quilt.

The cover features calico squares upon which people wrote down their thoughts – whether happy or sad.

Nearly 50 people sent their squares to organiser Ann Kader, and they were sewn together.

Ann said: "It's been a labour of love.

"This was a way of connecting Notte Street Community Cafe and the Unitarian Church communities during lockdown and for people to know they had not been forgotten.

"We were given a National Lottery Community grant to do this. Everyone was sent a rectangle of calico, pens, stamped addressed envelopes and instructions.

"They wrote on the calico how they were feeling. This was then made into a quilt by a few of us. It's very moving."

The quilt is now finished and will eventually be displayed in the café and the church and Ann is also hoping to take it to the Birmingham Quilt Festival.



We've put together this handy list so you can see who your Housing Officer is.

If you need to get in touch with them, please call 0808 230 6500 and ask for them by name.



Ernes

Dave W



Yelver

Steve D



Honic

Gavin V



St Bud

Lorrain



South

Vaness



Whitle

Clare T



Whitle

James



Leigh

Eggb

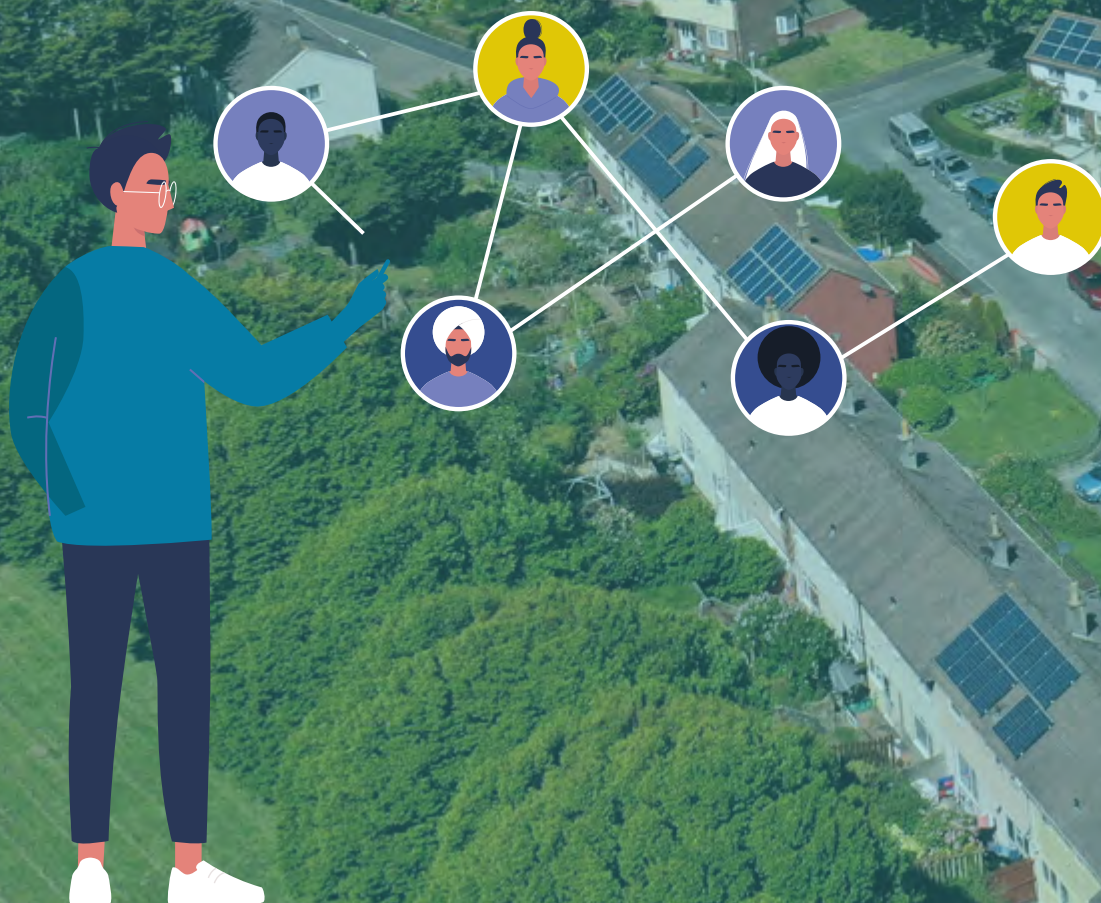
Stepha



Efford

Little



Vicky





HOUSING OFFICERS





ettle
Valley



erton, West Park
Didymus



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West



eaux, Barne Barton
Oliver

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Hancock




am, Estover,
uckland, Plympton
anie Russell

d, Deer Park,
America
Ware





**Coxside, Mount Gould
Plymstock, Hooe**
Mark Bailey



**Ham, Beacon Park,
North Prospect**
Heidi Bavin



North Prospect
Natalie Samuels



Mount Wise
Paula Williams



Devonport, Stoke
Kate McGarry



Morice Town/Keyham
Rachael Fox



**Callington, St Anns Chapel
West Stonehouse**
Nicola Blackwell



Tavistock, City Centre
Sarah Chidgey



**Liskeard, Barbican,
East Stonehouse**
Marissa Maloney



CLEAN OUR PATCH



Chunks of an Andersen shelter, ammunition boxes and wrappers from the 90s are just some of the more unusual items that have been found on litter picks throughout the city.

The unusual finds are among 20,000 bin bags of rubbish that have been picked up by volunteers working with Clean Our Patch, a community litter picking group.

We've recently given the group, a community interest company, £300 from our community grant pot to buy litter picking equipment including hi-vis jackets, gloves and litter picking hoops.

We're supportive of their efforts to clean up Plymouth – Communities Worker Ryan Huws works with them to regularly clean up Efford streets and also at the Efford Marsh Nature Reserve and Ernesettle housing officer Dave Walley has been out and about with them on his patch.

The group was started by husband and wife El Clarke and Ashton Samuels three years ago in a bid to tidy up their street in Keyham.

El has been Highly Commended in our Lockdown Legends awards for her work cleaning up the city.

She said: "I posted something about it on Facebook and people said they wanted to join in. People were coming from different areas and we thought we should go where they are too.

"We were quickly overwhelmed so set up an ambassadors programme – people acted as team leaders to recruit volunteers and ran picks in their area.

El added: "It's not all modern stuff we find. We've found rubbish from the 80s and 90s and some dates back to the 60s – we've got a whole archive.

"There are crisp packets and sweet wrappers from years ago and even ice pole wrappers. You name it, we have probably found it.

"Stonehouse is a particularly bad area with drug paraphernalia. A lot of woods in the north are also neglected. I think it comes down to health and safety and a lack of money. We have the benefit of a good volunteer base."

The group has started to work on more neglected woodland areas which have had a lot of flytipping. They found an 'insane' amount of rubbish in Bircham Woods in Estover.

Does El think the litter problem in Plymouth is getting better or worse?

She said: "Attitudes are changing. People are becoming more conscious of litter, not just in Plymouth but around the world. We are never going to get on top of it though until big companies change the way they produce things. As soon as one does it, they all will.

"We're soon going to start doing a schools programme, going in and educating kids and doing litter picks. Educating kids will force parents to make a change – kids can be persistent. And they are so aware of the environmental impact."



20,000

BIN BAGS
OF RUBBISH



36 GROUPS

AROUND THE
CITY

ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIAL



If you would like to join in with a Clean our Patch litter pick, check out their Facebook page Clean our Patch CIC to find out where and when they're meeting. Anyone is welcome to join – there's no need to sign up, just turn up.

£98,000

is how much it costs us to remove flytipping on our estates each year. That's money we can't spend on services for you!

WITH £98,000 WE COULD...

PUT IT TOWARDS BUILDING FIVE NEW MUCH-NEEDED HOMES FOR LOCAL FAMILIES.

PROVIDE 5,500 FREE PLACES FOR YOUNG TENANTS ON A 12 WEEK SUMMER BASKETBALL PROGRAMME.

HOST 98 COMMUNITY FUN DAYS FOR AROUND 200 PEOPLE, WITH ACTIVITIES AND PRIZES ALL DAY FOR FAMILIES.

BUY 8,680 TINS OF PAINT TO SPRUCE UP YOUR HOMES

Please help keep our estates clear by not dumping bulky waste in communal areas.

Let's end flytipping for good, then we can start thinking about how to spend all that money we've saved!

If you see someone flytipping report it to us on **0808 230 6500**.



We knew that the past year had been tough for many people due to Covid.

Illness, redundancy and social isolation took its toll on many people's physical and mental health.

Which is why we decided to honour those who stepped up and made life that little bit better for their friends, neighbours and local community.

So we launched our Lockdown Legends competition earlier this year, asking residents to nominate those who went the extra mile – and are we glad we did.

We were bowled over by the sheer outpouring of love and support the nominees showed to others over the past few months.

Some of the nominees and winners were going through incredibly difficult times themselves – but that didn't stop them from reaching out to others.

Our Executive Management Team found judging the winners a mammoth task, as there were so many worthy entrants. They chose seven people to win a £50 Love2Shop voucher and 29 highly commended (including four PCH members of staff) to receive a £20 Love2Shop voucher.

John Clark, Chief Executive of PCH, said: "There truly are some selfless people out there who were prepared to put themselves before others during the pandemic - and who continue to do so. They give so much and ask for very little in return so I'm pleased that we're able to honour their achievements through these awards. Congratulations to everyone."

You can read the winners' stories over the next few pages of this issue.



Teresa has had a tough year herself. Not only is she a full-time care worker, working 12–14 hours shifts, she also lost her best friend and an uncle in recent months.

Yet she continued going to work, not wanting to leave her employer in the lurch.

She has been a massive support to her friends and family, often dropping round care packages on her limited time and not asking for anything in return.

She was nominated by Laura, one of her daughters, who called Teresa her 'hero'.

Laura said: "Mum is often exhausted, but she never complains. Someone who has gone through such trauma is never expected to do what she does, but there she is when you need her even when she's suffering herself and this to me is the definition of a hero. My hero."

Teresa said: "It's so nice to receive this."



Alan Elphick and Leroy Pope

These friends and Mount Wise Towers neighbours delivered food every Wednesday to those in need in the Towers – despite having their own health problems.

Leroy was also praised for keeping the communal garden going and helping his neighbours with their shopping – one called him a ‘joy’ to have as a neighbour.

Leroy said: “The Food Bank at Devonport Help a Neighbour in Pembroke Street was struggling to deliver so I began doing deliveries for them. I asked Alan if he’d help. We ended up doing two vanloads a day some days. We delivered to all three towers.”

Alan said: “We never expected to get any recognition for this.”

The pair are so thoughtful of others, they even said they would spend some of their voucher on items for the Food Bank – true legends!



DIRECTOR VIEWS NEW HOMES

Our new Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods has been seeing first-hand the progress that's being made on our Cornish new-build schemes.

Carl Brazier visited two of our sites to check out our completed homes and chat to staff and residents.

His first port of call was at Copper Downs in St Ann's Chapel, where we've got 13 homes at the development.

Ferndale Developers has now completed work on the scheme, which includes eight homes for affordable rent and five for shared ownership sale through SO Living.

Carl chatted to residents Laura and Simon, the new occupiers of a Copper Downs flat.

The couple are from the South West but have recently been living in Scotland. They jumped at the chance to move back to the area when the flat became available.

Laura said: "We're nearer to family and it's much quieter here – although I think Cornwall is actually colder than Scotland!"

Carl also viewed Meadowbrook at Callington, a Baker Estates development. Our allocation is 36 homes for affordable rent and 15 for shared ownership.

Project Manager Gavin Sutton showed Carl our completed homes, which sit alongside 120 homes for open market sale by Baker.

Carl said: "It's great to get out and about, meet some of our customers and see the area. I was impressed with the homes."

All our homes are being let or sold as part of a Section 106 agreement with Cornwall Council, which means first preference will go to buyers and renters with a local connection.

Another Cornish development in the pipeline is our partnership with Wainhomes in Liskeard who are building 46 homes for us – 32 for affordable rent and 14 for shared ownership sale.



We'll be moving forward with plans to build approximately 1,000 new affordable homes by 2026 supported by refinancing our loan facility with NatWest and increasing it to £65m.

We'll use this funding package to grow our existing portfolio of more than 16,000 homes and support the modernisation of our current homes.

The increased lending facilities sit alongside funding we already have.

The majority of the new homes will be let at affordable rent – with shared ownership homes also being developed – in Plymouth and the surrounding areas.

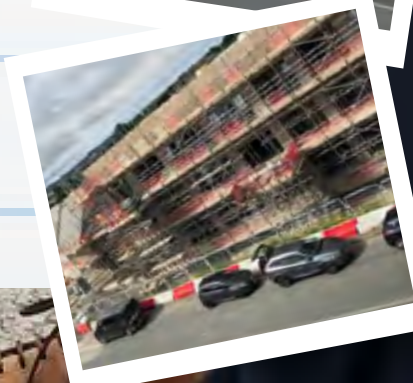
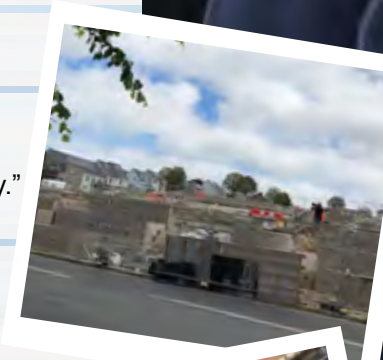
Nick Jackson, Director of Business Services and Development at PCH, said: "Thanks to the funding from NatWest, we can both expand our portfolio of affordable homes, as well as ensuring we can invest in bringing our existing homes up to a more modern environmentally-friendly standard and continue the great services we offer.

"We will improve our blocks of flats as well as support community initiatives, courses and training sessions which we believe are essential in supporting our residents and in creating thriving communities. The funding arrangements mean we'll be able to undertake the modernisation of our blocks of flats with more flexibility."

The funding forms part of NatWest's recent commitment to support the housing association sector with £3 billion of finance over the next three years. This will support the increase in the provision of social housing, as well as the improvement of existing properties.

These photos show the new homes rising out of the ground at the Phase 4 of the North Prospect regeneration along North Prospect Road.

Meanwhile, over at Phase 5, views from the roof of the Beacon show the progress being made on the over 55's apartment block.





LOCKDOWN LEGEND



Nothing is too much trouble for North Prospect residents Malcom and Susan Stredwick, who live in the Beacon flats.

They rushed up to check on their upstairs neighbour in the middle of the night after hearing a loud banging coming from his flat.

Thankfully, it only turned out to be a bottle of water that had fallen off a table but the couple are ever alert to others' needs.

The pair – who have been married for 49 years – have passed on their phone number to fellow residents and told them to call if they need anything.

They've helped people who've fallen ill, done shopping and assisted with paperwork.

The Stredwicks have also maintained the Beacon's roof garden, using their own money to pay for paint and plants, spending hours tidying it up and improving it.

Susan also regularly cleans the sun room so it can be used safely by the community.

Malcolm said: "We love it here. We try and get people involved. We don't mind helping anybody. Everyone needs help at some time."

They also organise prize draws at Christmas and bingo. Susan added: "It keeps us busy. We try and coax people out of their flats."



MAYFLOWER LEAT

PLYMOUTH



1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes
available for shared ownership



Register your interest!

0800 0778 748

so-living@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk



In April our Board formally adopted the charter, which makes six commitments, our promises to you.

Over time we'll work with you to explore and decide what each promise should mean. Here's what we've done so far:

- Run a survey and started working with a group of residents about what information is important, how we should provide it, and how to make it accessible.
- Working to ensure our annual report is influenced by what the survey and group of residents are telling us.
- Amending the performance information we collect and share, to make sure it's what residents are telling us is most important for them to know.
- Planning the 2021 Residents' Design conference, an opportunity to talk to you about what's important for us to consider when building new homes.

To share information about the Together with Tenants Charter commitments as widely as we can, and to invite many more residents to get involved in conversations with us, we've produced an animation that we'll be sharing on social media and our website. You can see it by going to www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk and clicking on our Together with Tenants page.



Relationships:

Housing associations will treat all residents with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between residents and housing associations will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.

Communication:

Residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from their housing association on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues.

Voice and influence:

Housing associations will seek and value the views of residents, and will use this information to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

To find out more, contact the Communities Team on 0808 230 6500 or communities@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk.





We told you in our last issue that we've signed up to the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter. Here's an update.

Accountability:

Collectively, residents will work in partnership with their housing association to independently scrutinise and hold their housing association to account for the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services.

Quality:

Residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

When things go wrong:

Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.



PIECE OF HISTORY LIVENING UP CITY CENTRE STREET



SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICES TO START UP AGAIN

After a long pause during the pandemic, we've restarted our resident scrutiny process.

Our Scrutiny Steering Group worked with us to develop a list of potential topics that will be looked at in detail by residents, to check how we're doing and report back to us.

More than 150 residents voted on the list and as a result a group of residents will be recruited to examine the chosen topic – a process we call Resident Review.

The topic most voted for is about the interactions between PCH contractors and residents they deliver work to.

Look out for an invitation to be involved in this

A replica of the Mayflower which has been built outside one of our blocks has been entered into the Britain in Bloom competition.

The giant galleon, which has been outside Notte Street flats for the past few months, has attracted the attention of hundreds of passersby.

The metalwork, which was put together by our rangers and ARC Metalcraft as part of the delayed Mayflower 400 celebrations, has been planted with various flowers and entered into the prestigious gardening contest.

Housing officer Marissa Maloney and Assistant Housing Officer Nikki Bickford have worked closely with residents to get them involved in the planting.

The ship points in the direction of the Mayflower steps and is on the Mayflower route walk, lending a reminder of Plymouth's heritage for tourists to enjoy on their walk.

ARC Metalcraft Ltd worked with us to create and install new railings at homes around the city and offered to give something back to residents as part of the project – with two of their most experienced metal fabricators working on the installation.

The idea was brought to life by Brian Parker and James Tasker from PCH who worked together to help design the ship.

Barbara Bottomley, Senior Repairs and Operations Manager for PCH, said: "We're really pleased with the work ARC have carried out for us and the fact they recognise that social value is at the heart of everything we do – residents have been really enthusiastic about the project."

Paul Bettey, Director at ARC Metalcraft said: "We know that PCH are an organisation with a social heart so we wanted to gift something back to their residents. We've worked hard on this project. It will be a real gem on one of Plymouth's busiest streets and we hope to see lots of tourists taking pictures in front of it!"

Resident Review. There'll be surveys and focus groups coming soon.

Our 2020 Resident Review looked at the topic of getting hold of the right person at PCH.

That group has also restarted after a pause, and they'll be taking their report and the PCH response to our Customer Focus Committee this summer.

We'll let you know about changes made and planned as a result of their work in a future issue of In Touch.

If you'd like to learn more about resident reviews, contact our Communities team on 0808 230 6500.



It seems Dawn Laphorn can turn her hand to anything, a true fixer who gets things done.

Dawn founded the Don't Dump It Site Plymouth and Surrounding areas to help reduce landfill. People with items to dispose of put up a post to give them away to anyone who can make use of them and it has turned into a real community page.

She has also teamed up with Hillsborough Spiritualist Church in Mutley to create a Food Bank to help those struggling throughout lockdown.

Dawn is also one of the 'go to' people if there is a lost animal that needs help or microchipping.

And if that wasn't enough, she has also created the Dinosaurs of Plymouth Facebook page to help put a smile on children's faces by encouraging people to dress up as dinosaurs.

Dawn said: "Last year someone offered me £10 to get them some food and before I knew it people were throwing money at me. I put 69 Christmas dinners together – for the last 24 meals I had to ask someone to help me! People know to come to me for help now."

"This Food Bank isn't like the rest of them. People don't need a voucher or to be referred. Working people struggle.

"I saw people dressed up as dinosaurs running around. It made people smile. Cars were beeping and drivers waving."





This issue is a celebration of the environment and how we can all protect it, so it's fitting that two of our winners were nominated because of efforts to make Plymouth a more pleasant place to live.

If Cath Jutson looks familiar to you, that may be because you've seen her picking up litter in and around the Barbican.

City centre resident Cath is described as a 'pillar of the community' by Housing Officer Marissa Maloney, who nominated her.

Marissa said: "During the first lockdown, she helped other services who were not out on our estates working as usual by picking up rubbish in the streets, not only around our blocks and land but along the Barbican and the Hoe Waterfront.

"Cath joined other volunteers assisting with this task on a daily basis. She helped rangers when they were not on site by collecting dumped flytipping and storing it safely until their return, assisting in keeping the gardens maintained and clear of rubbish and generally helping residents who were vulnerable, providing essential items for them to eat and clean so that they did not have to go to the shops."

Marissa added that Cath, who has her own litter picking gear, also helps other residents who struggle to take out their rubbish.

Cath said: "I was brought up to look out for other people. I refuse to sit down. It's mind over matter. Picking up litter is a good way to start the day."

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Subject to change due to
Covid rules



Meet your Housing Officer Liz Fox

How long have you been working at PCH?

I started with PCH in March 2019 as a Tenancy Sustainment Officer based at the Mount Wise Towers and moved over to my current role in December 2019.

What attracted you to the organisation?

Whilst completing a Leadership course at City College, I studied alongside an employee of PCH.

I learnt a lot about what PCH does around the city and its values which shape their work and decision making. I wanted to work for a local company that had a positive impact on the city.

What are the best parts of your job?

Getting to meet people (and sometimes their pets). They come from different walks of life and have lots of stories to share. I like being able to get out and about to interact with people and signpost them to sources of support when needed.

Tamara Partnership latest

In the last issue of In Touch, we told you about a new project which could improve job prospects for residents.

The Tamara Partnership is a lottery-funded programme aiming to make the Tamar Valley better for its communities by making the landscape more robust and less susceptible to a range of pressures.

Part of this includes setting up apprenticeships and internships.

The Tamara Trainees will be launching soon and our Resident Learning Coordinator Ashleigh Knowles is working with partner organisations to develop the plan.

Look out for Taster Days coming soon, and then short courses and apprenticeships in the coming months and years.

If you'd like to register your interest please contact Ashleigh by emailing communitiesteam@plymouthcommunity-homes.co.uk or call **0808 230 6500** and ask for the Communities Team.



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We're always keen to hear what you're up to, so if you'd like to tell us about something we can include in In Touch, we'd love to hear it.

Email news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

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