

InTouch

Issue 65 Spring 2026



Meet Michelle Dawson - Executive Director of Homes & Communities - Pg 6

Rent and service charges from April 2026 - Pg 8

Communities and Partnerships Update - Pg 10

Read InTouch online
bit.ly/PCHInTouch



Dude Sutton - Pg 18



Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of InTouch

As we welcome in the warmer weather and brighter evenings, we're happy to bring you a roundup of our latest activity and some exciting news about what PCH is doing in your community.

In this edition we introduce you to Michelle Dawson, our Executive Director of Homes & Communities, and hear from Michelle about her priorities for improving customer services at Plymouth Community Homes. If you have a question for Michelle, please get in touch by emailing news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or pass it on to your Housing Officer.

In February, we wrote to all our residents to let you know what the new rents and service charges will be for the year ahead. More information about how we set our rents and service charges, and the help available for tenants who may be struggling, can be found within this magazine and on our website.

In our latest Communities and Partnerships update, we introduce our Wellbeing Officer and share an update about our Community Wellbeing Champion training programme in partnership with Livewell Southwest, as well as stories about our tree planting efforts across the city.

Please do take a moment to read our moving Plymspirational feature which shines a spotlight on PCH resident, seven-year-old Dude Sutton. Dude has a rare and incurable brain condition, and he and his family have been closely supported by Children's Hospice South West, one of PCH's Charities of the Year for 2025/2026. We hear from Dude's mum Kerrie who has bravely shared a personal account of Dude's journey following his diagnosis in 2022.

Elsewhere in the newsletter you can also find out more about the work we're doing to invest in your homes, we're helping Plymouth people to connect to work, and more about how to contact your local housing team and report fly-tipping and dog fouling.

If you have any stories about your achievements, or the good work of your neighbours, we want to hear from you.

Contact us on news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or message us on Facebook, X or Instagram.



Valerie

**Valerie Lee,
Chair of the Board**



Plymouth Scrapstore overjoyed with new van from PCH

In 2024, Plymouth Community Homes donated a van to Plymouth Scrapstore, a local community project which plays a role in delivering playful creativity and promoting play through craft and sustainability throughout Plymouth.

The van was loaned to them in 2023 and following the loan, PCH decided to donate the vehicle to the Scrapstore free of charge permanently, as it had served its purpose at PCH and could be given a second life within the community.



This year, its sister van was put up for sale at PCH, and rather than selling at an auction, PCH offered the van purchase opportunity to Plymouth Scrapstore.

In January, Joy met with Pete Jackson, PCH Fleet Manager, to collect the keys to the van, which has allowed the project to double its workload and reach even more people in the city.

Peter Jackson, said: “I have been overjoyed to be able to help Plymouth Scrapstore once again with the sale of this van to help them expand their capabilities as a charity around the city.

Fly-tipping and dog fouling in your neighbourhood

Fly-tipping is a term used to describe any rubbish or items illegally left on land without the owner's permission. It can include large items like white goods, furniture, garden waste, commercial builder waste, litter and any refuse that householders can't fit in the household waste bins.

Fly-tipping is a criminal offence and in recent months we have seen an increase of fly-tipping, as well as dog fouling across our sites. We're working with Plymouth City



“This will see them help so many more people in need and enable them to do more collections each week.

“Although this van was not free of charge like the last one, we were able to offer it to them at a reduced cost because of its age, and the fact that we wanted to help them out once again in this way.

“They are an asset to this city, and I look forward to them going from strength to strength in the future from our help in this way.”

Joy from Plymouth Scrapstore, said: “The first van donated by PCH was amazing and such a great help.

“Having two vans rather than one will make such a difference and we'll now be able to be in two places at once, doubling the work we can do.

“Thank you PCH. We're overwhelmed by your generosity.”



Find out more about Plymouth Scrapstore

Council to improve our communities, and all cases of both fly-tipping and dog fouling that we're made aware of will be sent to the Council for investigation, which could result in a fine for those responsible.

Help us to keep your neighbourhoods clean and tidy and dispose of your unwanted items and dog mess properly.

[Read more on InTouch online](#)

2024 – 2025 Resident Review – The standard of PCH shared spaces

For the 2024/25 Resident Review, a group of 11 residents undertook an extensive piece of work to scrutinise various areas of Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) to understand the current standard of our shared spaces.

Shared spaces were defined as any communal space that PCH owns, that PCH residents have access to (this includes but isn't limited to green spaces, stairwells, balconies, community rooms and laundries).

The group identified both good practice as well as areas for improvement.

How we listened

The group undertook seven meetings, ten activities (such as meeting and shadowing staff), ran a resident and staff survey, and reviewed complaints information, strategies, Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), articles, and consultation results to gather the information required for their final report.

What you said

The Review team found that whilst there were positive actions being taken by PCH such as projects to address fly-tipping, bodycam trials for PCH staff, and information provided to new PCH residents; numerous areas were identified for improvement.

These included:

- the use of more hard-wearing materials to reduce vandalism
- simpler access to land ownership maps for staff and residents
- staff to be more involved in consultation where projects impact their work
- increased pre-tenancy education for residents
- improved technology for Tenancy Management Staff
- diversified involvement in the PCH service charge steering group
- more information provided on service charges
- priority repairs for communal spaces
- updates to the PCH fly-tipping reporting page
- updates needed for communal spaces aesthetics
- and an increase of security lighting needed

What we will be doing

Each of the areas identified for improvement, as well as the 5 main recommendations listed (below), are allocated to the relevant teams within PCH to take responsibility for, and report on their progress to the PCH Customer Focus Committee within 12 months. The progress of these will vary due to the scale and nature of the work required to action these improvements. We have already made progress in some areas and these are evidenced on the next page.



Commissioned work to assess how land/buildings can be re-purposed

To understand if PCH can reduce maintenance time and cost through re-purposing of land



Community Walkabouts

To improve residents' attendance and opportunities for residents to engage with staff within the community



Service Charge communication

To improve how Services Charges are communicated to PCH residents



QR Codes

To explore how QR codes can provide more efficient access to information and opportunities to report problem issues



CCTV

To increase accessibility of current CCTV provision, and explore options for increased CCTV at PCH sites

You said:	We did:
<p>Updates were needed to the PCH website to enable the upload of larger files when reporting matters such as Fly-tipping.</p>	<p>The PCH website has been updated from a file upload size of 3MB to 10MB, with information given on how to reduce file sizes if they are still too large to upload.</p>
<p>The information given to residents in the annual Rent and Service Charge increase letter was excessive, and needed simplifying.</p>	<p>The Communications team have used this feedback, as well as influence from the Rents consultation and PCH Resident Communications Advisors (RCA) to amend the annual Rent and Service Charge increase letter in a way that is more resident-friendly.</p>
<p>Work needed to be undertaken to improve the engagement with, and efficiency of Community Walkabouts.</p>	<p>A review is now underway to understand where Community Walkabouts may be duplicating work carried out by other teams within PCH, and to understand all data related to Walkabouts. The focus from the review is to emerge with an adapted approach that both identifies issues that need resolving, as well as providing a meaningful method of engaging with residents. There has also been an increase in promotion via all communications channels - including website and social media with more regular posts, and featured in the winter edition of InTouch, as well as more scheduled for future editions.</p>
<p>PCH needed to investigate the utilisation of QR codes to make reporting of issues simpler and more direct.</p>	<p>PCH will be trialling this method for the reporting of fly tipping, with media and communications being distributed in February 2026. This will inform the future approach to this method, and will be rolled out on a wider scale once the data has been reviewed on how effective this has been.</p>
<p>Work was required to explore CCTV options that can be permanently or temporarily installed at locations to combat anti-social behaviour (ASB) and increase security in areas of concern.</p>	<p>PCH has successfully secured funding for the installation of CCTV at a number of sites across the city. PCH is now actively conducting meetings to focus on developing a wider approach to funding future CCTV deployments, including priority consideration for localities with current or recurring issues.</p>





Interview: Michelle Dawson, Executive Director of Homes & Communities

In this issue of InTouch, we sat down with Michelle Dawson, PCH's Executive Director of Homes & Communities, to talk about her priorities, the improvements underway, and how PCH is preparing for the future.

Michelle initially joined PCH in November 2024 and was formally appointed to the role of Executive Director of Homes and Communities in 2025.

Before joining PCH, Michelle worked for more than 20 years in roles driving transformative change and has worked in housing since 2007 with a focus on customer service, community empowerment and regeneration.

Q: Michelle, what does your role at PCH involve?

My role is about making sure residents receive consistent, reliable services across their homes and neighbourhoods. I oversee teams working in neighbourhoods and tenancy management, income and lettings, customer experience, repairs and building safety, and community support. All of these areas directly affect how residents experience PCH, so it's important they work well together.

Q: What are the main things you're focusing on right now?

A lot of our work at the moment is about strengthening how we deliver our services to residents and making our services easier to use.

Repairs are a major priority. We want to resolve issues first time wherever possible, so we're improving how we diagnose repairs and introducing new systems that help us respond more quickly and more accurately.

We're also updating how residents can get in touch with us. We are planning to introduce a new phone system to help improve how we handle your calls, and we're expanding what you can do through MyPCH. It's important to us that residents can choose a way of contacting us that works for them.

Another area we're developing is Thriving Neighbourhoods, which brings our housing, environmental services and communities teams together. This helps us respond faster and gives residents a clearer sense of who is supporting their area.

And of course, we know many households are still feeling the cost of living pressures, so our income and financial support team continue to offer support and advice when residents need it.

Q: How do you make sure resident views influence what you do?

Listening to residents is a core part of how we shape and improve services. We use several different ways to gather feedback so we hear a wide range of experiences.

We work closely with our Customer Focus Committee (CFC) and the Resident Communications Advisors (RCA) Panel, who both play an important role in challenging us, highlighting areas for improvement, and helping us understand the impact our decisions have on residents.

Alongside this, we carry out resident scrutiny reviews. These are in depth service reviews led by residents themselves. They look closely at how a particular service works, what residents experience day to day, and where things could be improved. Scrutiny reviews give us direct, practical recommendations from the people who use our services, and we use these findings to make real changes. They are a vital way for residents to hold us to account and ensure we are delivering what matters most.



We also learn from feedback shared through complaints, resident surveys, community conversations and direct contact with staff. All of this helps us build a clearer picture of what is working well and where we need to focus our efforts.

The aim is simple: resident voices shape our services, not the other way around.

Q: Finally, what would you like residents to know?

I want residents to feel confident that we're listening and acting on what matters to them. We're working to make our services easier to access, more consistent, and more responsive, and we'll continue improving them with residents' experiences at the centre.



Our RCA panel were given the opportunity to ask Michelle a question to be answered within this edition of InTouch.

Q: How do you foresee the future demographic of social housing stock changing as our population demographics continue to change?

We're already seeing changes in the types of homes people need. As the population shifts, we expect greater demand for different layouts, better accessibility, and varying levels of support depending on people's circumstances.

To plan for this properly, we will be developing a new Supported Housing Strategy. This will look at

the types of homes and support services we'll need in the future, how we design or adapt properties, and how we help residents live independently and safely.

At the same time, most of our residents live in general needs homes, and these remain a priority. The strategy will help us balance both areas—continuing to invest in good quality homes for the majority while strengthening the support and accommodation options for residents who need something more specialised.

The aim is to make sure our housing offer reflects the way our community is changing, without losing focus on the core services everyone relies on.

Have a question for Michelle?

Please get in touch if you have a question for Michelle, which we can answer in another Q&A or can provide the answer via your Housing Officer. You can email news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or pass on a question to your Housing Officer.



The Beacon Café retains its 5-star food hygiene rating!

The Beacon Café has once again achieved the highest possible 5-star food hygiene rating following a recent inspection by the Food Standards Agency.

Special recognition goes to Claire Kittle, who joined the Beacon Café team in May 2025 and has worked tirelessly to maintain the café to such a high standard. The inspector had nothing but praise for the café on the day, highlighting the excellent practices in place.

Beth Valentine, Interim Commercial Premises Manager at PCH, said: "This rating is a fantastic

achievement and a real credit to both Claire and Kayleigh. It reflects the care, professionalism, and pride taken in maintaining excellent food safety standards every single day. Claire works incredibly hard to prepare delicious, high-quality food for our local community, and this result shows that those efforts really do make a difference."

A huge congratulations to Claire and also to Kayleigh, Beacon Officer in the Commercial team, on this well-deserved achievement!

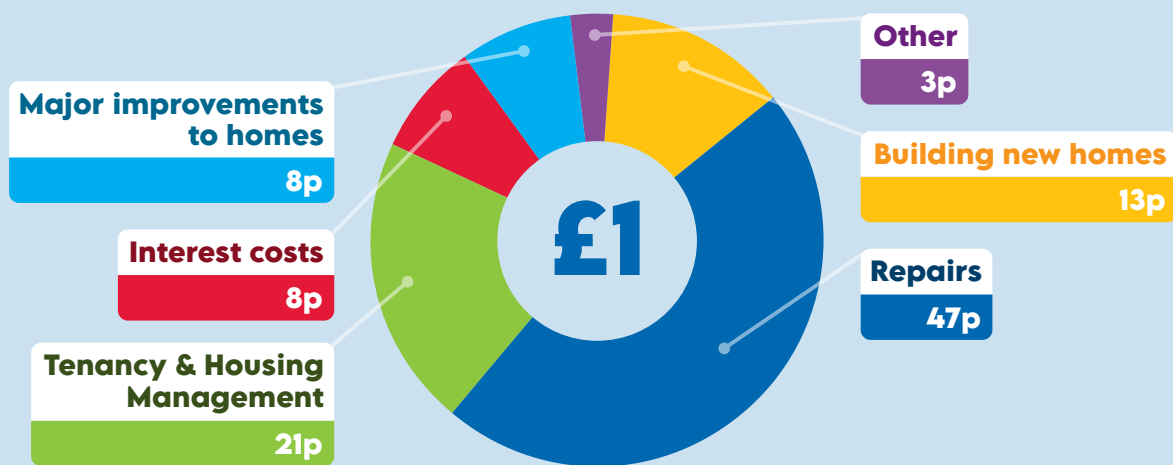
Rent and service charges from April 2026

Plymouth Community Homes has written to all our tenants to let you know what the new rents and service charges will be for the year ahead.

PCH is proud to offer tenants excellent value for money, and our rents remain significantly lower than other local social housing associations, as well as all private rents.

In fact, our social rents are on average the fourth lowest in England – and are at least 50% lower than the cost of renting the same property from a private landlord, while our affordable rents on newer homes are between 20 and 30% lower than if rented privately.

How we spent £1 of the rent money we received in 2024/25



Figures show how each £1 of rent income is allocated

Not for profit

As a social landlord and a not for profit community benefit organisation with no shareholders, PCH invests all money from rents back into looking after our homes and communities, and building more homes for future residents.

Some residents also pay us a service charge in addition to their social rent, which includes the cost of providing communal services like caretaking, cleaning, grounds maintenance and, in some blocks, services like communal lighting, individual heating and TV services.

Residents living in sheltered accommodation pay a service charge which includes the cost of providing support services.

PCH does not make any profit on service charges, and only charges what it actually costs to provide those services.

Rents this year

Our rents are our main source of income to help us pay for repairs and improvements. We set our rents using Government guidance and the inflation rate, and this year from April 2026, rent increases will be 4.8%.

This is based on the September 2025 Consumer Prices inflation rate of 3.8% plus 1%.

The rent increases of 4.8% also apply to shared owners and those renting garages or parking spaces.

Every tenant will have received an individual letter in February explaining their own rent and service charges, and what the changes mean for them.

Service charges this year

Tenants who pay a service charge will have also received a statement to explain what their new service charges will be for the coming year.

This year, the majority of our service charges will be increasing by an average of 3.6%. Individual increases vary depending on where you live and which services you receive.

The increased charges are largely due to increased labour and staffing costs for delivering caretaking and grounds maintenance services, as well as water utility costs rising by up to 50%.

Here to help

We know that any change in household finances can be difficult, and we understand the cost-of-living pressures facing our tenants. We are trying to help our tenants with these challenges as much as we can.

PCH staff are here to support you if you are struggling to pay your bills, and can offer help with applying for benefits, reducing your bills or accessing Government financial support.

More information about how we set our rents and service charges, and the help available for tenants who may be struggling, can be found on our website at <https://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/rent-or-buy/rents-and-service-charges/>

Here you'll find videos explaining both processes, as well as answers to a lot of common questions.

You can also call our team on **0800 028 0350** or **(01752) 388121**.

Time to Talk Day 2026 – Andy's Man Club

To mark Time to Talk Day, last month we were joined by Steve from Andy's Man Club who hosted a presentation for staff of Plymouth Community Homes, followed by a Q&A and open discussion about mental health, with a focus on men's wellbeing.

Andy's Man Club are a men's suicide prevention charity, offering free to attend peer-to-peer support groups across the United Kingdom and online. They want to end the stigma surrounding men's mental health and help men through the power of conversation.

This session was free for all staff and was a great opportunity to learn, share, and support each other.

Steve Doyle, Andy's Man Club Area Lead for the South West of England, said: "It was a pleasure to be invited in to speak with staff at Plymouth Community Homes.



"As one of Plymouth's largest and well-known organisations, I think it's great that PCH take the time to lead by example and support their staff and their residents by making them aware of external Mental Health support (such as Andy's Man Club) available in the city."



Find a support group near you



Communities & Partnerships Update

Welcome to our latest Communities and Partnerships update.

Health & Housing Project Update – March 2026

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) and Livewell Southwest continue to work in partnership to help improve health and wellbeing outcomes for our residents. The project aims to help people live independently, safely, and healthily at home for longer.

To speak to the Health and Housing Project team or to find out more about the support that is provided please email healthandhousing@pch.co.uk.

Meet Sarah, our Wellbeing Officer

In July 2024, the Wellbeing Officer role was created to provide tailored health and wellbeing support to residents. As well as offering practical support for up to a 12-week period, they provide help with accessing services, assisting our residents to work towards health and wellbeing goals and help reduce social isolation within our communities.

Our Wellbeing Officer has so far supported 85 residents one to one.

From September – December 2025, Sarah completed 12 new initial assessments, made 70 referrals to support services, and closed 10 cases.

We heard from a PCH resident who received support from Sarah in 2025.

They said: “Sarah has literally been the difference of me giving up to feeling positive and creating a clean future. The respect she’s shown me has made me feel so at ease and I have never felt judged or felt anxious about her calls or visits.

“I honestly think she’s the only person who I always message or call back and look forward to her coming round.”

To access support from our Wellbeing Officer, you can contact Sarah on healthandhousing@pch.co.uk.



Community Wellbeing Champion Programme

Last year, many residents took part in the Community Wellbeing Champion Programme to gain the knowledge, skills and support to play an active role in helping others with their wellbeing. A total of 56 people have now completed the programme.



The two-day programme delivered by PCH & Livewell Southwest provides all attendees with a recognised qualification, access to resources and connects them to a network of other Wellbeing Champions, to help them support the wellbeing of their community.

Congratulations to our most recent Wellbeing Champions, who took part in the last session of 2025 and in February 2026.

If you’re interested in helping others, are already playing an active role in your community or just have an interest in wellbeing, keep an eye on our social media channels and in our monthly resident newsletter to find out the upcoming training dates. Alternatively, contact 07738852243 or healthandhousing@pch.co.uk to find out more.

Communities Updates

Devonport Futures roundup

The Devonport Futures Digital Essentials Programme, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered by Real Ideas Organisation in partnership with Plymouth Community Homes, has now completed and made a real impact in Devonport and wider Plymouth, providing opportunities to develop digital skills and seek employment opportunities.

The programme aimed to address the digital divide, focusing not only on access to technology, but on building the skills, confidence and support needed to use digital tools effectively.

Free courses were offered to anyone aged 18 and over living in Plymouth, and PCH were keen to ensure our residents benefited from this fantastic opportunity. This included providing additional support to residents to explore further training opportunities following the course.

Key Achievements:

Participation:

- 158 individuals completed the Digital Essentials programme, including 33 PCH residents who progressed to further qualifications or courses. The programme's target reach was exceeded by 44%.

Impact:

- 76% reported improved progression opportunities.
- 12% secured employment directly linked to the programme.
- 27% transitioned into education or training.

Inclusivity:

- Reached diverse profiles, 30% unemployed, 36% economically inactive, and 21% employed seeking upskilling.

Programme Quality:

- 96% of participants said expectations were met or exceeded; 97% felt it helped them progress.

The partnership between PCH and RIO has been a key enabler of the programme's reach and impact.

Janner Men's Shed donate barn owl box to Devon Wildlife Trust

Over the years, the Janner Men's Shed have made dozens of wooden bird boxes to sell and donate to good causes. This time, they've gone one step further and built a bespoke owl nest box which has been donated to the Devon Wildlife Trust.

The Janner Men's Shed meet weekly at Leigham Community Hall. This popular group comes together to socialise, have lunch and complete word work. It's a safe place to meet, converse, share skills, create, and make new friends and is supported by Ryan Huws, Communities worker at PCH.

Claire from the Devon Wildlife Trust paid a visit to Leigham Community Hall in January to collect the box and meet the Sheddors.

Ryan Huws, said: "Janner Men's Shed Members Mike and Kenny built the owl nest box, and Richard got in touch with Devon Wildlife Trust to tell them about it, and we're so glad that they're now using the box in one of their wildlife sanctuaries.

"The group has worked with many organisations throughout the city and are pleased to now also add the Devon Wildlife Trust to the list."

Claire Inglis, Area Reserves Officer at Devon Wildlife Trust, said: "On behalf of Devon Wildlife Trust I extend great thanks to the members of Janner Men's Shed for the generous donation of this hand-built barn owl box. This will be installed at our wonderful reserve Andrew's Wood and will offer important shelter, roosting and nesting opportunities for barn owls, potentially supporting breeding success whilst also allowing for ease of monitoring under licence.

"The support of volunteers and local community initiatives such as yours is crucial in aiding the work of the Trust. It is fantastic to be able to join together to benefit the special habitats and species found in Devon."

Would you like to get involved with a community project this spring? Contact the Communities Team on 0808 230 6500 or email us on communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk to find out more.



Future for PCH and RIO

Looking ahead, PCH and RIO will continue to work in partnership, identifying opportunities to support community investment in Devonport and across Plymouth.

This includes ongoing collaboration to support the development of the Devonport Creative Quarter.

Together, we will continue to champion projects that strengthen economic participation, build confidence, and ensure Devonport remains a place where people can learn, work and thrive.



Read more on
InTouch online

Tree Planting with partners at King Street, St Leo Place & Wingfield Rd

In January, Plymouth Community Homes worked with our tree planting partners and contractors to plant a number of trees across the city and to enhance our outside spaces.

King Street

In 2025, residents at King Street were passionate about brightening up the outside communal spaces around their block. Our Communities team supported them with a small grant to help fund their efforts. During summer 2025, residents continued their work, growing fruit to share with their neighbours and making jams.

PCH supported residents to apply for a £1,500 grant from our Money Tree Fund which was used to buy a new greenhouse, two new water butts and all of the trees and shrubs planted at a tree planting day in January 2026.

The greenhouse and water butt were kindly built and installed by our contractor MJ Pepper as part of their social value commitment to our residents.

The tree planting day was joined by local residents, PCH staff, the contractor and volunteers from Plymouth Tree People.

Leigh Ferguson, Senior Communities Worker, said: “It’s been great to see how local residents have taken ownership of communal space around the block at King Street. By sharing what they have grown with their neighbours, they really helped to build a lovely community spirit in the area.

“We were thrilled to be able to support the great work they have been doing with a grant from our Money Tree Fund and the planting day.

“I would like to thank our residents for their efforts, MJ Pepper for their generosity, Plymouth Tree People for supporting with advice and tree planting, the Money Tree Fund panel for awarding the money needed to fund this and to Ryan Huws, one of our Communities Workers, for his expertise and support for the project.”



Richard, a local PCH resident, said: “The tree planting day went really well, and it’s really nice to see how it has brightened up the area that we live. Having fruit trees really fosters a great community spirit, as the ten minutes taken to plant the trees will make an impact on everyone.”

What is the Money Tree Fund?

The Money Tree Fund is available from PCH to help improve the areas where people live. Grants can be used to help create more pleasant places to live that feel safer or look more attractive for groups of residents. It is intended to fund projects that make a lasting difference to the environment in which tenants live.

Where tenants, working together with PCH staff, have a suggestion for improving the environment for people living there, they can bid to the Fund for financial support for their idea.

If you have a project you feel would benefit our community and would like to find out more about the fund, please contact our Communities & Partnerships Team on 0808 230 6500.

Keyham Road & St Leo Place

We were joined by Plymouth Tree People volunteers in January to plant 14 standards and 9 shrubs around the flats on Keyham Road and St Leo Place. Ahead of the planting day, Ryan Huws, Communities Worker, talked to residents about the project. Following a positive response, the tree planting day was arranged, and residents were invited to attend and join in with the planting.

This scheme is supported by the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest project through UK government funding.



Wingfield Road

At the end of January, PCH staff, Plymouth Tree People volunteers and the local community met to plant 42 trees of a variety of species, following a planting day held in November 2025 to initially plant 8 Field Maple trees and one Oak tree. Despite the very wet weather, the day was a huge success and was Plymouth Tree People's largest planting day yet. A huge thank you to everyone who got involved.

This scheme is supported by the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest project through UK government funding.

Next for this area will be the installation of two picnic benches!

Ernesettle Community Noticeboard

Residents of Ernesettle are now benefitting from a new community noticeboard.

Sadly, three noticeboards at the Hornchurch Road Shops in Ernesettle were damaged and irreparable, which is why the local community asked if PCH could support them to have a larger, more robust noticeboard as a replacement.

To gauge community interest, we carried out a local survey and, finding keen interest in a new notice board, PCH successfully made a bid for £2,000 social value funding together with a £400 contribution from the Councillors' Community Grant.

The new Community Noticeboard was fitted in December 2025 in time for the community to advertise their last Christmas Market. There are 15 local groups and organisations with keys, all agreeing to follow guidelines twritten with local community activists.

The new board shows our commitment to encourage respect for shared spaces and improve community cohesion.

Nadine, the PL5 Pathways Champion for Ernesettle, agreed to champion the noticeboard. **She said:** "It is lovely to have such a big space for us to really shout about all the events that take place in Ernesettle. The more information about what's going on gets seen, the more the area can grow its community engagement and sense of belonging. Please contact me with any questions, queries, or key requests. Together we can make this board the place to advertise locally!"

PL5 Pathways is a four-year project at the Four Greens Community Trust which covers north of the A38 and includes Honicknowle, Ernesettle and Whitleigh. Its aim is to support people who are facing medical or personal barriers. This project has received funding from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund.





Help Your Neighbour: Help Yourself

Do you have the time to support a neighbour who lives alone, or could you benefit from an extra helping hand?

To help us to combat social isolation in PCH homes, we'd really appreciate your support to help us look out for residents who may not be actively seeking support from us or from local agencies.

Whether it's a weekly phone call or visit or an offer to pick up essentials when you're heading to the shop, your support would help make a real difference to your neighbour's life.

Our Wellbeing Officer in partnership with Livewell Southwest is also on hand to support and signpost residents who may need a little extra to help them live a happy and fulfilled life.

You can access their support by reaching out to your local housing team, or by emailing them on healthandhousing@pch.co.uk.

If you're looking to donate your time to a similar cause, you can apply to be a 'Good Neighbour Support Volunteer' through Plymouth City Council on their website. [Click here to find out more and to apply.](#)

Be aware of housing disrepair scammers

Housing disrepair scammers are working across the area at the moment, and please be aware that some may call you, visit your home or send you a letter claiming to work for Plymouth Community Homes.

If they call, scam agencies typically start the call with an open-ended question about booking a repair and will often then fish for information, asking you to give out your bank details. Some companies may call about 'no win no fee' claims.

If agency reps visit your home and falsely claim to work for PCH, always ask to see their lanyard as a sure way to confirm their identity. Our PCH staff will always be happy to show this blue, branded lanyard to you to confirm who they are. Please do not allow anyone into your home unless you are certain of their identity and the purpose of their visit.

If you think the phone call could be a scam, put the phone down and ring us back on 0808 230 6500, where we'll be able to verify the call. You can also verify the identity of our employees if you receive a visit in person by calling us on 0808 230 6500.

If you have any concerns about this or a visit that you may have had, please make our Contact Centre team aware.

If you have fallen victim to a housing disrepair scam, you can give feedback to the Government about your experience - www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/housing-disrepair-claims

If you're experiencing damp and mould, or if you require a repair in your property, we're here to help.

Please call us on 0808 230 6500, raise your issue via MyPCH, fill out an enquiry form on our website, message us on Facebook or X, visit us at Plumer House, Tailyour Road, Crownhill, Plymouth, PL6 5DH or write to Housing Repairs at the address above.



How to contact your local housing team

There are many ways that you can contact your local housing team directly, including via email or phone, and the details of your Housing Officer, Assistant Housing Officer and Incomes Officer or Leasehold Officer can be found on our website.

Visit 'Find my Housing Team' and enter your postcode to find out who your local team are, and how to contact them.

You can also visit the housing team in your area during a drop-in session or during a community walkabout, where you can also tell us what you think of your area and what we can improve.

Or you can call us on 0808 230 6500 and speak to our friendly Contact Centre team, email us at enquiries@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or get in touch through social media channels like Facebook, X or Instagram.

You can also visit us at our Head Office – Plumer House, Tailyour Road, Plymouth, PL6 5DH.

In October 2025, we made a number of changes to how our housing teams operate in local communities, including moving some housing officers to cover different areas, to help improve the services we provide to residents and allow us to respond quickly and effectively to any resident enquiries.

You may find that your local housing team has remained the same, or there may be a few changes to who looks after your neighbourhood, but should you need to contact us about your tenancy, home or neighbourhood, your Housing team is here to help.



Find your housing team

PCH secures 17 homes in Exeter

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) will be delivering more homes on the outskirts of Exeter after securing 17 homes for social rent at Elm Park in Matford, built by Cavanna Homes.

The 17 new homes are our first homes with developer Cavanna Homes and consist of one- and two-bedroom apartments and five three-bedroom houses. The homes have been secured and will be delivered thanks to funding from Homes England.

They will be prioritised to those with a local connection to the area to meet the specific needs of the community, which has been made possible thanks to the support from partner, Teignbridge District Council.

Gavin Sutton, Development Manager at Plymouth Community Homes, said: "I am pleased that we are now working with Cavanna Homes to deliver this scheme, and I hope that that this will be the first of many opportunities this year that will help us to deliver on our ambitious plan to provide more affordable housing in Devon and Cornwall.

"We are delighted to partner with another developer who views social housing as a long-term investment in community stability, delivering homes that are safe and a place where people are proud to live."

Shahi Islam, Director of Affordable Housing Grants at Homes England, added: "As the Government's housing and regeneration agency, increasing the supply of quality affordable homes remains one of our key objectives and we are committed to supporting Plymouth Community Homes in achieving their ambitions.

"Elm Park is a prime example of how we work collaboratively with partners to deliver our mission to build thriving communities that people can be proud of."

The first homes which are to be offered for social rent will be available from Winter 2026.

All available homes to rent in Devon are advertised on Devon Home Choice, a partnership of local social landlords. To bid for a property or to be considered for a tenancy, registration will need to be completed using their online application form.



Investing in Your Home – March 2026

To ensure everyone has a high-quality affordable home, it's vital we look after the places we already own and invest in our communities to keep our homes safe, comfortable, warm and dry.

Every year, we have a Major Works Investment Programme to refurbish and upgrade our homes and blocks, decarbonising more properties to help reduce energy bills for our residents.

At the end of December 2025, we shared the third update about the 2025/26 programme with information about the exciting developments, meaningful community contributions and real stories of impact from the quarter.

In this latest update, we'll be sharing news and photos of our kitchen and bathroom replacement programmes and block refurbishments carried out at Camden Street and Congreve Gardens.



Read more on InTouch online

Kitchen replacement programme

Lee Adams, Contract Supervisor in our Asset Management team, shares an update on our kitchen replacement programme:

“The programme delivers modern, high-quality kitchens while giving residents the opportunity to personalise key components, including flooring, kitchen units, worktops, tiles, and paint finishes.

“Each kitchen is carefully designed to meet both residents’ individual preferences and our specifications, ensuring compliance with HHSRS and Decent Homes Standards. Early resident engagement is a key feature of the process: the chosen contractors and supplier conduct on-site surveys, liaises with tenants, and produces computer-generated images to demonstrate the proposed kitchen layout.

“Each installation takes future-proofing into account and upgrades the property to meet modern requirements, including mechanical ventilation for damp-prone areas, asbestos removal, gas compliance, and water hygiene standards.

“Since we started several months ago, the programme has received very positive feedback from residents, highlighting the transformation and improvement to their homes.

“This initiative continues to strengthen our commitment to improving the resident experience as well as property standards, and future-proofing homes.”

Our resident whose kitchen was replaced, said: “Thank you to everyone for the amazing work on my kitchen. The team were polite, respectful, and a pleasure to have in my home. I had waited a long time for this and couldn't be happier with the result. Much appreciated.”

Another added: “What a difference this has made—I am extremely happy with the quality of the work and the improvement it has brought to my home.”





Bathroom replacement programme

Claire Bryant, Assistant Contract Supervisor in our Asset Management team, shares an update on our bathroom replacement programme.

“Our bathroom replacement programme is now well underway and already making a positive difference in many homes.

“The upgraded bathrooms are being completed to a high standard, with a focus on durability, comfort, and a more modern design. The upgraded bathrooms include new showers and bathroom suites, durable finishes, better lighting, and improved ventilation. Good ventilation helps remove moisture from the air, reducing condensation, damp, and mould which are helping to keep homes healthy.

“Each installation upgrades the property to meet modern requirements, including mechanical ventilation for damp-prone areas, asbestos removal, and water hygiene standards.

“The chosen contractors have worked hard to minimise disruption and keep residents informed throughout the process with the PCH team attending site most days whilst work is being undertaken. A key part of this programme has been listening to residents and involving them in decisions about their homes, as well as making sure all decisions are in line with compliance and Decent Homes Standards.

“Residents are given the opportunity to personalise the key components including flooring, tile colour, and paint. Many residents have told us they appreciate being asked for their views and having a say in the final design.

“As part of the upgrade programme, the team recognised the need to think about every aspect of the new flooring, and we are now proud to say we are offering dementia-friendly approved vinyl flooring in bathrooms. This change reflects our commitment to creating homes that meet the needs of residents at all stages of life.”

Why this matters:

- Reduces visual confusion – the flooring has consistent colour and patterning, which helps avoid misinterpretation of shadows or shapes
- Improves safety – slip-resistant surfaces help reduce the risk of falls
- Supports independence – clear, easy-to-navigate flooring helps residents feel more confident using their bathroom
- Easy to clean and maintain – supporting good hygiene and long-term durability

Our resident said: “I was a bit nervous before the work started, but the team explained everything clearly. Being able to choose the tile colour made a big difference, and I’m really happy with how my new bathroom looks. It feels brighter and much nicer to use.”

Another resident added: “I was very grateful to have an appointment before the work started, where the Asset Team really listened to my needs and installed a wet room instead of a bath. It was a bigger job than I originally thought but I was spoken with everyday and the finished result has been genuinely life changing for me.”

“Stories like this show how important good communication and thoughtful design are in making a real difference.

“The bathroom upgrade programme will continue over the coming years. Residents due to receive upgrades will be contacted in advance with clear timescales, information about what to expect and opportunities to discuss choices and ask questions.”



Dude Sutton

We are shining a spotlight on inspirational Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) resident, seven-year-old Dude Sutton.

Dude Sutton has a rare and incurable brain condition named 4H Leukodystrophy, a disease that causes the white matter in his brain to deteriorate, leading to the loss of abilities like walking, talking and even smiling.

Children’s Hospice South West (CHSW), one of PCH’s charities of the year this year, has been a lifeline for Dude, offering much needed respite for the family while also providing care and support for his siblings. CHSW teams have been there in the most challenging moments, ensuring that Dude and his family never feel alone, and offering a sense of normality and joy during an incredibly difficult journey.

Dude joined us at our Plumer House Christmas tree light switch on in December 2025, alongside his family and charity representatives from CHSW, and our second charity of the year for 2025/2026, St Luke’s Hospice Plymouth.

Here, Dude’s mum Kerrie Sutton shares a personal account of Dude’s journey following his diagnosis in 2022 at the age of three.

Kerrie Sutton writes:

I remember the very beginning like it was another lifetime.

Before hospitals. Before words like ‘degenerative’ and ‘terminal’ entered our vocabulary. Before the world learned how to break my heart in slow motion.

Dude came into this world like a spark. Loud lungs, bright eyes, a presence that filled the room before

anyone even noticed how small he was. Plymouth skies were lit with fireworks that day, but my boy brought his own light. From the moment I held him, I knew he was different—not fragile, not weak, just powerful in a way that doesn’t shout, but stays.

The early years were full of the usual chaos. Sticky fingers. Endless questions. A laugh that came from his whole body, like it couldn’t be contained.

He loved being outside: muddy shoes, cold air, freedom. He was a boy who felt things deeply. The sort who would stop to watch the sea for too long or hold onto my hand like he was anchoring himself to me.

Then came the things that didn’t quite fit.

A stumble here. A delay there. Words he struggled to find. Movements that once came naturally suddenly needing effort. People told me not to worry. “Kids develop at their own pace,” they said. And I wanted to believe them—I did—but a mother knows. Somewhere deep in my chest, a quiet alarm had started ringing.

Appointments blurred into one another. Tests. Waiting rooms. That awful stretch of time where you’re suspended between hope and dread. And then the day everything split into ‘before’ and ‘after’.

“A Plymouth boy with a warrior’s heart. A child whose life, no matter how long or short, has already changed everyone who has truly seen him.”



4H leukodystrophy. A rare condition. Progressive. Terminal.

I remember nodding as the doctor spoke, like I understood. Like my heart wasn't shattering into a thousand pieces inside my body. I remember thinking 'This can't be our story. He's only a child.'

I remember walking out of that room knowing I would never be the same woman again.

Dude was seven when the word terminal settled over our lives like a shadow that never leaves. Seven years old when I learned that loving him would also mean learning how to grieve him while he is still here.

And yet here's the thing no one prepares you for: Dude didn't become smaller after the diagnosis. The world did.

He taught me how to live in moments instead of futures. How to celebrate tiny victories like they were miracles, because they are. A good day. A smile. A laugh that still cuts through everything.

His courage isn't loud. It's quiet. Steady. It shows up every morning when his body doesn't cooperate, but his spirit does.

Some days are cruel. Watching skills fade. Watching fatigue steal pieces of him. Watching him fight battles no child should ever have to fight. There are nights I cry into pillows so he doesn't hear. Nights I bargain with the universe, offering anything in exchange for more time.

But there is also love, so much love it hurts.

Dude has a way of looking at me like he knows. Like he understands more than we give him credit for. Like he's teaching me how to be brave. He still finds joy. Still finds wonder. Still finds reasons to laugh. And every time he does, I am reminded that this illness does not define him.

He is not a diagnosis.

He is not a prognosis.

He is my son.



A Plymouth boy with a warrior's heart. A child whose life, no matter how long or short, has already changed everyone who has truly seen him.

He has taught me that love doesn't disappear when the future is uncertain. It becomes sharper, deeper, more urgent.

We are still here.

This is the now.

Every day is precious. Every moment is borrowed. And while I don't know how much time we have left, I know this: Dude Sutton's life matters.

His story matters. And as long as I am breathing, I will tell it: for him, for us, and for every parent walking this impossible road.

He is my beginning.

He is my everything.

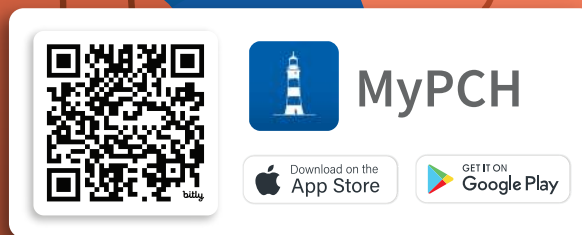
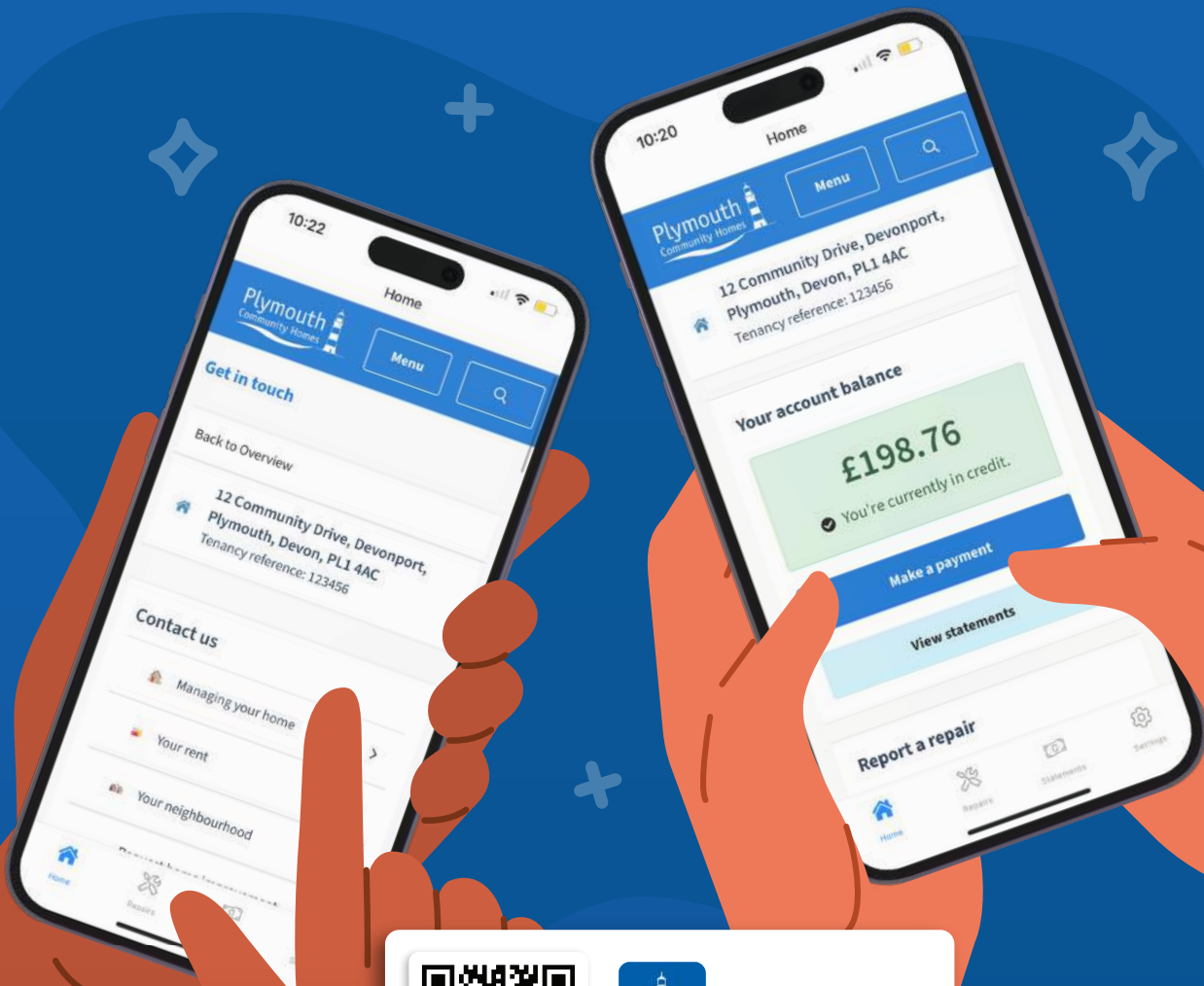
"With every birthday candle and every shooting star, I whisper the same wish into the universe: a cure for my boy" - Dude's mum Kerrie



Follow Dude's journey



Sign up to MyPCH




Visit mypch.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk
or download the new MyPCH app.


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 one of our publications, we'd love to hear it.

Email news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

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