

Derby Homes News

Spring/Summer

2021



www.derbyhomes.org

 @DerbyHomes

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Welcome to another edition of Derby Homes News. I think it's fair to say that it's been a difficult winter for all of us, but as we move through spring, we can see some positive signs.

Many of you will have had your vaccines by the time you read this, as have a lot of our staff. It's reassuring, but for the time being, we'll be keeping many of our health and safety measures in place. That means our public receptions are still closed, wherever possible appointments will be carried out over the phone, and we'll be taking extra precautions if we visit your home.

We have started to accept non-urgent repairs again and are planning in any scheduled improvements that were postponed. If you do need to report a repair, please continue to bear with us. We are seeing an increase in work requests and it may mean that appointments are not available as soon as you'd normally expect. As you can imagine, we are experiencing high levels of demand. We appreciate your patience and promise we'll get to you as soon as we can.

If you weren't aware, our contract with Derby City Council has been agreed to be renewed for another ten years.

This means we'll continue to operate as an arms-length organisation, managing properties and delivering services on behalf of the Council. The pandemic has seen us working even more closely with the Council to ensure key services for tenants and residents have continued and that support has been in place for those who are vulnerable. It's really exciting that we will now get to continue this work and further develop the partnership to improve services for the city.

I am sure that we are all hoping to see an end to restrictions but for the moment we need to wait and see. We will continue to keep you up-to-date with what that means. Remember, we post all the latest updates on our website and social media channels - give us a follow!



Maria Murphy
Managing Director

Community Response Hub

Derby City Council are working with Community Action Derby, Derby Homes and a number of community organisations across the city, to help with shopping, collecting prescriptions and befriending for anyone who is:

- self-isolating because someone in their household is at risk
- struggling to meet their basic needs

- pregnant
- at risk because of underlying health conditions
- aged 70 or over

Volunteers needed!

If you need help or want to volunteer, contact DerbyDirect on **01332 640000**. Lines are open between 8.30AM and 5.00PM, Monday to Friday. Please encourage anyone who may need help to get in touch.

There's also a dedicated email address if you're unable to call: covidsupport@communityactionderby.org.uk



01332 640 000



covidsupport@communityactionderby.org.uk

Leaseholder News






Estimated charges

Estimated charges for the forthcoming year have been posted to leaseholders, and you should have received yours before 31 March.

Leaseholders should have also received consultation letters about the new painting and roofing contracts. For most people, there are no cost implications. We have plans to renew to the roofs of properties in Crecy Close and Louvain Road, and these leaseholders have been contacted separately. If you have any concerns, please contact the Leasehold Team on **01332 888557**.

Communication Survey results

We only had 19 responses out of 653 possible respondents. Surveys help us to understand what you think, so if you disagree with the results and didn't give feedback please let us know in the next survey.

-  **Top 2 reasons** to contact us were for **Repairs** and **Service Charges**
-  **Most** respondents (61%) prefer to contact us by **email**
-  **Half** of respondents would use an **online forum** to connect with other leaseholders
-  **A third** of respondents didn't know about the **twice yearly meetings**
-  **Two thirds** of respondents would like to see more information on **Communal Repairs** on our website

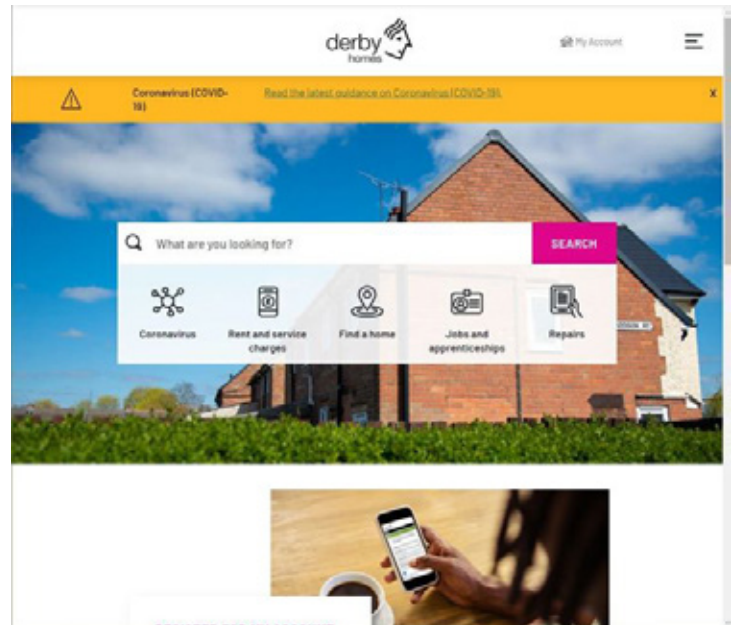
There were lots of other questions too. If you'd like to know more, or when the next leaseholder meeting is, email: **leaseholdservice@derbyhomes.org**

Rent Calendars

The new rent variation packs have been sent out to all tenants - you should have received yours in early March.

Unlike previous years, we've not included a rent calendar. After consulting with tenants, it was agreed that sending one out to everyone isn't the best use of resources. But don't worry - if you love your rent calendar, you can sign up to **MyAccount**, and you can see your rent account live. Alternatively, download a copy from our website.

www.derbyhomes.org/your-home/tenants/rent



Website design refresh

Our new website was recently relaunched! The new site has a fresh look, and is (hopefully) simpler, easier to read and less cluttered. This is the first time we've redesigned our website since 2011!

There are several features we think you'll like and find easier to use:

- Improved responsive design for PC, laptop, tablet and phones (finally)
- Simple and clear navigation
- Quick access to all services
- Clean and consistent page layouts
- Updated accessibility standards for people with visual, hearing or readability impairments.

All the same information is still on there to help you manage your home, pay your rent, and book repairs. We've restructured a number of sections, so you might want to have a look around and get used to the new layout.

This isn't the end of our focus on the website. We will continue to make improvements and alterations based on feedback, trends, usage and changes to our services. We intend to involve customers wherever possible to ensure the content is built around you.

We'd love you to let us what you think of the new site. If you have any feedback, good or bad, please get in touch with the Communications Team by emailing **comms@derbyhomes.org**.

It was agreed at a recent Derby City Council cabinet meeting that our contract as an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) will be renewed for a further 10 years.

Following a review by members and officers, the council determined that Derby Homes 'continues to perform highly, combining good services for tenants and leaseholders whilst offering value for money'.

Over the last 19 years, the Council has recognised the many benefits and efficiencies that can be achieved by enabling us to manage a wider portfolio of related services. Since starting out, we've taken on the management of areas beyond just housing management. We now directly manage the following council functions:

- Repairs Team (transferred in 2010/11)
- Public Buildings Maintenance (transferred in 2010/11)
- Milestone House Temporary Accommodation (transferred in 2011/12)
- Derby Advice (transferred in 2016/17)
- Housing Options and Homeless Services (transferred in 2016/17)

Working with tenants and residents

The creation of Derby Homes coincided with the move to give tenants a much greater say in how their estates were managed. Council tenants make up one-third of the membership of our Board. When we carried out our most recent customer survey, you told us that overall satisfaction with Derby Homes as a landlord is 95.3%.

Building homes for the future

From the outset, we've worked with the Council to increase the city's housing stock, by developing new homes where possible, but also bringing existing properties back into use and refurbishing them to modern standards.

The partnership has delivered over 550 new, affordable homes for Derby since 2008. The most recent development for the partnership saw nine new bungalows built in-house for War Memorial Village Derby (which you can see on the next page!). We've managed the properties at the village on behalf of the charity since May 2013 and were chosen as the main building partner to build the new bungalows.

DEADLINE APPROACHING EU Settlement Scheme

EU, EEA or Swiss citizens who were living in the UK on or before 31 December 2020 need to apply to remain in the UK after 30 June 2021.

Applicants will either get: 'Settled status' also known as Indefinite leave to remain or enter the UK, or 'Pre-settled status', also known as limited leave, to remain or enter into the UK. After 5 years of living in the UK, applicants can apply for settled status.

The EU Settlement Scheme not only gives people the right to live and work in the UK, but also provides access to free NHS healthcare, enrolment to education or continued education, and the ability to travel in and out of the UK. Applicants must complete three key steps to apply, by showing proof of identity, proof of residence and a criminality check.

For further information on how to apply, visit the EU settlement scheme pages on the gov.uk website.

The deadline for applications is 30 June 2021.

Helping build test centres

Did you know? Our Capital Works Team were involved in helping deliver the asymptomatic testing centres for key workers in the city. The first was originally at the Riverside Centre and more recently this has been replaced the reduced size testing area occupying the cafe at The Council House.



Derby's asymptomatic testing centre for the general public is located at **Queens Leisure Centre, Cathedral Rd, Derby DE1 3PA**. It offers support for all workers, people who need help with their test, and those who need help to complete their first test.

Opening hours are: Thursday 12pm - 7pm, Friday 12pm - 7pm, Saturday 10am - 4pm and Sunday 12pm - 7pm.

If you're heading to Chaddesden Park during the warmer weather, make sure you have a go on the new swings!

Following a consultation by Friends of Chaddesden Park, it was clear people wanted to see improvements to the existing play area. Local people and businesses donated money towards the project, raising £9000. We've then provided funding to install new swings for the play area, which was highlighted as a need by the local community.



CUSTOMER PRIORITIES | Dog Fouling

If you're walking your dog in Spondon and forget your doggy bags, don't panic! We've installed eight brand new poop bag dispensers so you'll never be caught off guard again.

In response to resident feedback, we've identified ongoing problems with dog fouling in Spondon as a customer priority to be tackled. We've been working with Derby City Council, Spondon Neighbourhood Board, Derby Parks and Friends of Spondon Parks to launch "Spondon Says No to Dog Fouling". We've provided funding for the project to purchase the dog bag dispensers and refillable bags to support a Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign around Sussex Circus.

The dispensers will be installed on Brunswick Park and Dale Road Park, along with a dog poo bin on Asterdale View: areas identified as hot spots by the local Public Protection Officer (PPO) and Neighbourhood Officer. The PPOs will be carrying out enforcement action, especially around problem areas where we've put up posters and done some floor stenciling.

Remember, if you fail to clean up after your dog immediately, you commit an offence and may receive:

🐾 a fixed penalty notice of £50

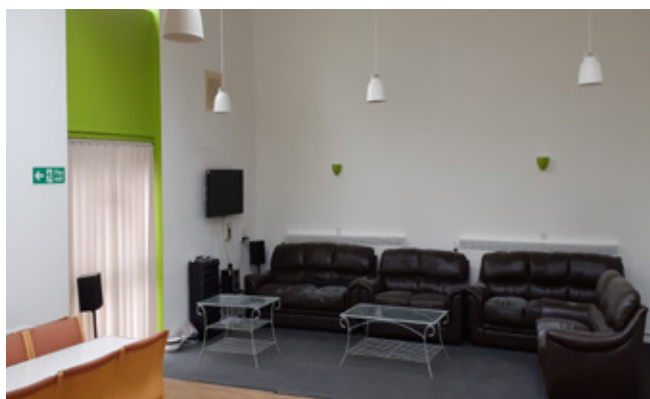
🐾 a fine of up to £1000 if you are convicted in court.



COMMUNITY ROOMS | Kestrel House

Like a lot of people during lockdown, we've used this time to get cracking with some refurbishments. Kestrel House common room has been freshly painted ready for when things start returning to some form of normality again.

For the moment, all our community rooms remain closed in line with government guidelines. We'll keep you up to date as and when this changes, in accordance with our risk assessments.



The Derby Association of Community Partners (DACP) have recently approved a £3000 grant for the Aspire Wrestling Academy, which will help them provide food for local, vulnerable people.

The DACP is a voluntary organisation for tenants and other community groups, who work with Derby Homes to ensure that we're providing an excellent service for customers. Aspire Wrestling Academy is run by Rob Shade, a well-known volunteer at Derby Homes. Many of our apprentices were involved in the refurbishment of St. Mark's Church in Chaddesden a few years ago, where they turned the old building into a place for Aspire to hold their wrestling sessions. Aspire have a focus on fitness, personal development, and work with many people struggling with mental health issues.

During the pandemic wrestling has been off the table, being a contact sport, but Aspire have turned their base into a local foodbank and continued to support their community. This £3000 will go a long way to helping them and the people they support.



BMX Estates Pride Funding

British Cycling has awarded Derby City Council funding worth £24,800 to create a new BMX cycle track on the former BMX track at Osmaston Park from its Places To Ride capital grants programme. A further 50% match funding coming from Derby City Council's Housing Revenue Account Estates Pride Budget, which is managed by Derby Homes.

The local users of the track who have been involved from the beginning will help to design the final look of the track based on their ideas for different features and how they would like to ride the course.



War Memorial Village

We've recently completed work on nine bungalows for War Memorial Village Derby, three of which you're able to see if you drive past the junction of Merrill Way/Chellaston Road.

In line with the council's vision to make Derby greener, we've installed some amazing new energy saving features in the properties. They include underfloor heating, air-source heat pumps, triple-glazing, solar roof panels and car ports to charge electric vehicles. These properties truly are a glimpse into the future of housing standards and something we're proud to have delivered for both the village and the city.

The homes have already been let and are nowfully occupied!



6 CUSTOMER SERVICE | Complaints

We try to get things right first time, but sometimes that doesn't always happen. If you think we've done something wrong, you can make a complaint.

If you're not satisfied with something we've done, you should first contact the staff who delivered the service, who will try to resolve it for you. You may also want to speak to the service manager. If you are still not happy, you can make a complaint. We aim to resolve all complaints first time.





It might be that the issue is a simple case of fixing whatever went wrong, or there might be a concern that's the result of a problem with our policy or procedure. Whatever the issue is, we always try to learn from what you tell us.

You can find our full complaints procedure on our website. It includes details about our complaints service and how to access it.

 www.derbyhomes.org/site-info/contact-us
 housing.complaints@derbyhomes.org

Remember, you also have the right to take a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

Contact the Housing Ombudsman

 0300 111 3000
 info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
 *Housing Ombudsman Service,
PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ*
 www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Case study: Learning from complaints

Over the last 12 months the majority of our work has been essential repairs and a large percentage of these jobs were water leaks. Out of all of the jobs we carried out we only received 51 complaints, but half of these found Derby Homes could have done better.

In one particular case a customer reported a problem with their toilet not flushing properly. We attended but caused a leak on the toilet which meant that we had to return twice to put it right. There was no damage caused, but it inconvenienced the customer. We apologised and made a small compensation payment in respect of the inconvenience they had suffered.

We ensured a supervisor visited our customers home to inspect the workmanship and they gave feedback to the original tradesperson to hopefully prevent this issue from happening again.

Improving future outcomes for all

As an organisation that subscribes to the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, it's important for us to be transparent about complaints we receive. We have systems in place to record all complaints and many are reviewed to explore if any 'lessons learned' can help us make changes to improve service delivery. Our aim is not just to put things right for the person that complained, but improve outcomes for all customers in the future.



In 12 months, we received 51 complaints about leaks in our properties, including taps, toilets, roofs and guttering.

51
RECEIVED

26
UPHELD

This means that in 26 cases, we investigated and found that the leak was our responsibility.



If it's our fault, we'll put it right, and we'll determine whether you're owed compensation for any damages (and if it's not our fault and just good old wear and tear, we'll still fix the leak).



The number of rough sleepers that have been recorded from Derby's spotlight informed estimate in the autumn of 2020 was six. The figure was announced earlier today by the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government as part of their official statistics on the Rough sleeping snapshot in England (2020). This is a reduction from the previous year where 14 rough sleepers were recorded following a spotlight informed estimate and continues the downward trend for the city, falling from 37 in 2017.

This is the lowest estimate the city has seen in a decade and highlights the progress made by partners over the past four years. Derby has seen significant investment made by the Government to achieve the reductions through the Rough Sleeper Initiative grant and general homelessness funding grants that are received annually. In addition, the strong partnership between Derby City Council, Derby Homes, Public Health, Derbyshire Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire, have provided further resources that compliment this funding.

Derby Homes is responsible for coordinating the city's response to homelessness and for delivering the

Council's statutory homelessness services. Our priorities are to prevent households from becoming homeless in the first place and to support those who are already homeless or sleeping rough to into sustainable accommodation.

All partners across the city have contributed to the progress that has been made with regular 'homeless liaison' meetings held throughout a period which has seen a new set of challenges brought about by the pandemic. Last year, Derby City Council answered the government's call to bring 'Everyone in' with their decision to block-book 100 rooms at The Holiday Inn on Pride Park between March and June. This allowed those without a home to safely isolate during the first lockdown. This initiative saw a new partnership being created with the Holiday Inn Express, Derby Homes, Public Health and Derby City Mission.

Keeping everyone in

Derby was amongst the first areas in the country to move rough sleepers on from hotel provision, having developed a series of 'housing pathways' to keep everyone in. These included six 'Housing First' properties

and the provision of some high-needs supported accommodation. This is complimented by the inception of a new Multi-Agency Rough Sleeper Hub which is supported by the key agencies and services in the city through a case management approach. The Hub aims to remove the barriers that may exist for the most vulnerable people in the city and help them in their transition from the streets into accommodation.

Since December 2020, further options for rough sleepers have been developed as part of Derby's Severe Weather Emergency Provision. These include six Covid-secure bed spaces at Safe Space and two houses with individual rooms (one house specifically for anyone that has tested positive for Covid). Use of bed and breakfast premises remains a further option to ensure we keep everyone in.

We have also provided a dedicated officer working with providers to ensure our supported accommodation has enough availability to meet demand. The new role means we have increased flexibility to move people into lower or higher needs supported accommodation where appropriate, depending on the individuals support needs and level of independence. ■

8 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR | Respect during lockdown

We've all been spending more time at home than usual. With that comes the risk of more noise, as people are cooped up together and more likely to get on one another's nerves (we're only human, after all!)

We take anti-social behaviour seriously and we'll do all we can to help tackle it, but we also need to make some allowances and consider whether someone's behaviour is just them going about their everyday life.

What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour (often abbreviated to ASB) is any action that can cause nuisance or annoyance to anyone. It can range from small things to serious crimes. We always look at things on a case-by-case basis to really understand what's going on, the possible causes and the impact the behaviour has on others.

The most common form of behaviour reported to us is noise nuisance. Unsurprisingly, during lockdown we've seen a big increase in the number of complaints.

Before reporting something to us

If your neighbour is being too noisy, you could try speaking to them. Often, people don't realise they're causing a problem. Although noise can be a real nuisance to people, it isn't always anti-social behaviour: just because you hate the sound of your upstairs neighbour vacuuming doesn't mean we need to immediately threaten them with letters to let them know we've opened a case about them!

Before you report an issue about your neighbours, think about:

- How long, often and bad is it?
- What time does it happen? (during 'reasonable hours?')
- If it is a one-off or continuing problem?
- If the noise is being made deliberately

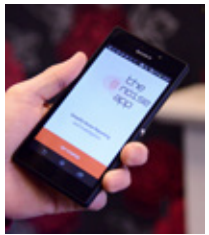
Living in close proximity to other people means we all inevitably hear them from time to time. Noise from things like children playing, occasional arguing, babies crying, people walking up/down stairs or on floorboards, occasional dog barking, gardening or DIY are not usually considered anti-social behaviour and you're expected to accept this type of noise as part of everyday living.

If an issue persists, get in touch with us and we can give you appropriate advice. We'll record anything you report to us, but will only act when we consider there is a genuine issue, or



behaviour which is caused by someone acting unreasonably. Keep a note of when the noise occurs.

The Noise App is a great way to do this, and can be downloaded on Google and Apple devices. It's useful to have a record in case the noise continues and we need to act.



Before using the noise app, please make sure you have reported noise nuisance to us first.

Being a good neighbour

On the flip side, being conscious of how much noise you're making is also important. Day-to-day life isn't quiet, but we can all take steps to be considerate of our neighbours. For example, you might be an early bird who likes to crack on with the hoovering first thing in the morning whilst working from home, but your neighbour might have just finished a night shift. Take a bit of extra care before doing anything that you know is going to be particularly noisy, and maybe let your neighbours know out of courtesy?

www.derbyhomes.org/community/asb

Concerned for someone's safety?

If you're concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a neighbour, friend or family member and think that they're in immediate harm or danger please call 999. You can also call the non-emergency number on 101 to raise concerns.

For some of us, ongoing or future restrictions are a very daunting prospect. You may be concerned about your own safety because of someone else in your household. We would encourage you to speak out and get advice on how to manage your situation.

You can do that by calling us, or you may prefer to call the National Domestic Violence Helpline for free on 0808 2000 247. For further support on domestic abuse, visit

www.refuge.co.uk

We don't want to worry you, but this is another reminder that we regularly receive calls from residents about scammers, burglars and bogus callers across the city.

REMEMBER: always check that a caller or visitor is genuine. Sometimes these people will claim to be from Derby Homes or the Council and say they need to carry out work, before asking you for a payment at the door. Other times, they'll simply use their visit as a distraction to try and steal something - they're not picky, and we've seen it all.



Are they in uniform?





Do they have ID?


Ask yourself: Does this visit seem genuine?


During the pandemic, we've seen an increase in scams like these: partly because people are in financially worse straights, and partly because it's easier to get away with when there's less contact and communication between neighbours and landlords.


There are a few things you can do to keep yourself safe from this type of crime.

 **Call us to check.** If you aren't certain whether or not a visit or call claiming to be from us is genuine, you can contact us on 01332 888777, and we will be happy to confirm it.

 **Always ask for ID.** All our staff should carry identification and many will be in uniform. Repairs staff may arrive in a branded vehicle. If they don't, is there a reason?

 **Safety checks.** Currently, due to coronavirus restrictions, we have additional safety measures in place for all visits. Does your caller appear to be cautious of any risks to you or themselves?

 **Never hand over any money.** We will never ask for any payment from you at your door.

 **Protect yourself. Report it.** Remember, if you feel threatened, unsafe or want to report suspicious behaviour, you should contact the police.



HM Government



NHS

Covid-19 vaccine

The NHS will get in touch when it's your turn to be vaccinated

Find out about the roll-out at nhs.uk/CovidVaccine

10 ESTATES MANAGEMENT | Grounds Maintenance

Just like everyone's hair, the grass on our estates was in need of a serious trim back in April. We are now well underway with this year's programme.

We started our first run of grass cutting around the city in March, having completed a successful winter programme of cutting hedges, tidying shrub beds and collecting leaves. During the pandemic, the Streetpride team have recruited new staff and we're optimistic about what we will achieve this year.

Along with new staff, we have new equipment and machinery which was purchased in 2020. Our priority is to keep our managed areas as something to be proud of and to maintain them regularly. We have also started our individual gardening service, and will be visiting over 500 properties from April to October.



Grass cutting machinery



The team you'll see around the city



Tidying the edges

YOUNG PEOPLE | Ignite & Connect - Youth Panel

Despite the pandemic, the Derby Homes Youth Panel, Ignite and Connect, have still been busy delivering projects to the young people across the city.

For anti-bullying week the group set up and conducted their very first podcast on bullying, the affects it has on young people and what to do if you are being bullied. The podcast was shared by a number of national anti-bullying charities. To have a listen head over to the Ignite and Connect instagram page [@ignite_connect](#).

We are also really excited to announce that they've also been working on a project creating real life work opportunities for

young people across Derby City.

It's been agreed that every young person who volunteers with Ignite and Connect will receive a guaranteed interview for an apprenticeship with Derby Homes when they leave school.

This project is in its early stages, but the hope is that it will help remove some barriers for young people who live in our properties and are unsure about how they can move into work. It will also give them the chance to gain valuable skills and experience interviewing, which will then help them throughout their careers.



For more info and how to get involved
DM us on Instagram [@ignite_connect](#).





There are plenty of reasons you may want to move home. If you want to move to another Council property, you need to have realistic expectations.

Social housing is in extremely high demand nationally. Far more people want a home than there are homes available. Many people will wait a long time before being offered a property, so it makes sense to explore all the available options there are to move. Have you thought of Mutual Exchange?

House Exchange may be able to help you find your ideal home. Simply match and move.

"I found my exchange within an hour of listing. Easy to use site, the choice is amazing."

Jenny Patterson

House Exchange | MOVING HOME 11

What is House Exchange?

Wherever you want to move, House Exchange helps you to find a suitable home within your local authority or further afield. Through a simple and easy to understand website, you will be able to see the latest listings as soon as they're available.

The multi-match service lets you and other home-seekers build a chain of exchanges – the more people looking for a move increases your chance of finding a swap.

Why wait? Get started today

1. Visit houseexchange.org.uk and complete the simple online registration form.
2. Once you have registered, your details will be activated and they will send you your login details by email or post.

3. Your property will appear in their database and you can search for potential exchanges on the website.

4. When you have found someone to swap your home with, you just need to contact us (Derby Homes act on behalf of your landlord if you are a council tenant) and we'll then go through the procedures needed to complete your exchange.

To match and move, simply visit www.houseexchange.org.uk



CAREERS | Apprenticeships

If you are interested in earning a wage while you study, then an apprenticeship might be the right choice for you.

We provide our apprentices with transferable qualifications and work experience to help them achieve a future career with us or with another employer. All our apprentices earn the National Minimum Wage (age specific) which reflects our view that apprentices make a real, valuable contribution to our workplace. There's a popular idea that apprentices are young people just out of school - and lots are - but there's no age limit on applying.

If you join us as an apprentice, you'll be working day-to-day with staff, picking up skills and experience as you go, and you'll also be expected to attend college.

We recently recruited to a number of positions in housing, joinery, plumbing, housing management, plastering, surveying and accounts (closes 30 June). Currently, the expectation is that all positions will start in September.

For more info, go to www.derbyhomes.org/jobs/apprenticeships



Electrical apprentice Anna

Apprentice surveyor Millie on site



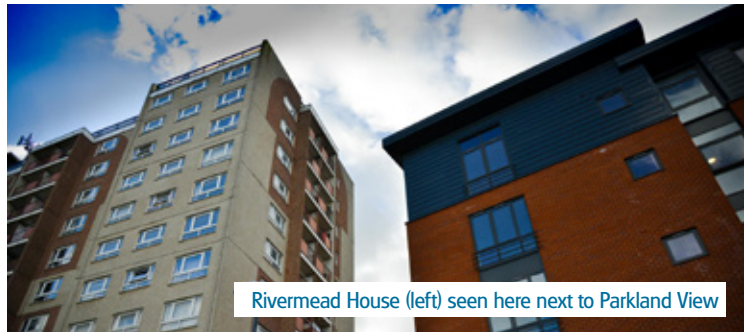
Neilesh, a former electrical apprentice, now has a full time job in our repairs team - and was Highly Commended for Apprentice Champion of the Year at the National Apprentice Awards

Rivermead House fire

Rivermead House, our only high-rise in the city suffered a fire in March. Thankfully, the fire service were on hand very quickly, and were able to put out the blaze fast. The fire damage was largely contained to a single flat, as there is fire protection built into the building.

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service commended residents for their quick thinking and how thoroughly they followed all the fire crew's instructions.

The Fire Investigation Officer later confirmed that Rivermead is a safe, well-managed building, and he was happy with how the incident was responded to by both residents and Derby Homes' staff. A community reassurance exercise took place shortly after the incident, with Derby Homes staff on hand to reassure residents of safety measures in the building.



Rivermead House (left) seen here next to Parkland View

Bonfires are a bad idea

As we move into summer and begin doing serious work in the garden, we often see people choosing to get rid of garden waste with bonfires.

But a garden bonfire can easily get out of hand, with fire spreading quickly from hedges, overhanging trees and even to garages and your home.



Not only do these fires pose a serious risk to you, your family, your property and the public, but out of control bonfires take fire crews away from other potentially life-threatening incidents. Plus, no-one sitting out in their garden enjoying the warm weather wants a face full of smoke!

If you do have garden waste, remember it belongs in your brown bin (or black, if you don't have a brown one). If you're going to be doing a lot of work in your garden, then it might be worth asking for one. Alternatively, drop garden waste off at your local recycling site - but don't forget, you need to book a slot! Go to the derby.gov.uk website to apply for a brown bin, or to book your slot to drop off waste at Raynesway Household Waste and Recycling Centre.

Have your say, virtually!

We've recently launched our Virtual Panel: a new way for you to get involved with us remotely and have your say on the service areas that matter to you. This is a chance to directly impact the services that affect you, and you don't even have to leave the house!



How does it work?

Head over to www.derbyhomes.org and search 'virtual panel' to sign up online.

Choose the service areas that you're interested in, and when we hold a consultation we'll send you an email with a link to a survey to complete. It's that simple! You can choose your own level of engagement, and there is no obligation to fill out any of the consultations you get sent.

Customer Voice update

We've been delighted to welcome four new members to Customer Voice over the lockdown period. During this difficult time we have still been very busy meeting online and continuing with our project work.

Thanks to everyone who responded to the recent survey about our next project. Anti-social behaviour was flagged as a priority, and we'll update you with our findings in a future issue or through social media.

In the meantime, we have already started work on our Homefinder project, looking at the application process for people wishing to join the housing register.

If you are interested in joining Customer Voice to help scrutinise and improve Derby Homes services, just email hub@derbyhomes.org or call **01332 88395**.

Lyn, Shirley, Win, Lesley, Patricia, Allison, Cindy, Alan, Claudia, Dale and Ruth