

# Resident and Community

Impact Assessment 2020-21



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# Introduction from Rachael Smart and Joan Swift

Welcome to our new Impact Assessment which reports on our activities with our communities throughout 2020/21. Of course most of this work was completed during the COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions which caused particular challenges both for PA Housing and the communities we serve.

We responded to the challenge of the lockdown by reaching out to the most vulnerable residents, organising care packs and supporting local businesses to help us source and deliver the packs. We supported 1,443 residents with a pack or vouchers and made over 6,000 calls. We also provided advice to residents on services in their local area by publishing 34 Borough guides on our website.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions we have continued to provide community investment and resident involvement services and opportunities, even though many of them have looked quite different. This assessment outlines some of the things we have done, but more importantly it shows the impact it has had on our residents and communities. For some of our longer term projects and initiatives we are able to show this in terms of social value or value to the community. We are currently applying this to many more of our services and the next assessment for 2021/22 will be able to show this in more detail.

We hope you find the assessment both interesting and enjoyable.

A portrait of Joan Swift, a woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a black floral patterned top. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

**Joan Swift**  
Resident Council / Customer  
Forum Chair

We have involved **3,139** residents in a range of activities

We have had a direct impact on **1,883** residents throughout the year

We have surveyed **17,857** residents this year

We spent a total of **£726,695** on community investment activities

A portrait of Rachael Smart, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue denim top. She is smiling at the camera.

**Rachael Smart**  
Assistant Director Housing Services

## Our response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Food and fuel poverty is often an issue for some of our residents and this has been made worse by the pandemic. As our residents' lives were affected many struggled to maintain the essentials like heating and eating. From the start, PA Housing, together with our involved residents and contractors wanted to be there to help.

We have provided **357** residents with care packs containing mainly food items

We have provided **296** residents with wellbeing packs containing blankets, toiletries, arts, crafts and hobby items

In partnership with our contractor Sureserve we provided **66** residents with gift packs over the Easter period

## Impact on residents who received Care Packs

**60%**

said that the packs meant they could afford to eat

**57%**

felt less stressed and less isolated

**40%**

said they had an increased choice of food

**11%**

learned how to cook with new ingredients

**28%**

felt it improved their mental health

**46%**

said it was their only means of getting food and non-essentials

## Supporting our residents

During the first lockdown, most Foodbanks closed. Our Community Fund, which is managed by involved residents and is used to fund community projects, events or equipment purchases, was restructured to provide the majority of funding for the care and wellbeing packs. Two of our contractors along with staff from across PA Housing came together to source, sort, pack and deliver the packs.



433

Supermarket food vouchers issued to residents



291

Foodbank vouchers issued to residents



192

Energy vouchers issued to residents that can be redeemed with most energy providers

## Supporting our local Foodbanks

We knew that Foodbanks would be an even more valuable resource during the pandemic than they had been before, so we also made financial contributions to help support them. We donated £20,000 to the Trussell Trust, the nation's largest foodbank network and a further £30,000 split between 13 individual foodbanks who directly support our residents.

## The Hardship Fund

The Tenancy Sustainment Team manages a Hardship Fund, which is used to help people who are suffering financial hardship and who may be vulnerable to falling into rent arrears. During 2020/21, special emphasis was placed on helping residents who were experiencing a reduction in income due to COVID-19.

During 2020/21 the fund provided **£70,649** to residents experiencing hardship.

# Resident Scrutiny



The main aim of this group of involved residents is to inspect, manage and improve PA Housing's services. They also work with service managers to agree actions based on their recommendations.

Despite the lockdown resident scrutiny has continued by using virtual technology and during 2020/21 the group has:

- Reviewed previous scrutiny work to ensure that PA Housing has met its promises. Over 80% of their recommendations had been met, and it highlighted where future work may be necessary around compliancy.
- Completed a comprehensive Health Check designed to ensure that our scrutiny process was robust and fit for a changing environment. This generated over 50 recommendations for future work

The scrutiny team is currently 6 fully involved residents - we are always looking for new recruits!

# Scrutiny Health Check

This involved 6 residents interviewing a number of managers at various levels across PA Housing and reviewed how our scrutiny is working.

- It highlighted the commitment of PA and residents.
- Recommended improving Board accountability and highlighted the need for a transparent golden thread
- That we should adopt shorter newer types of Scrutiny
- Gave the team an opportunity to meet a wide variety of staff across PA Housing
- Invited the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to examine and approve our process

## Customer Scrutiny

*"It's been a real challenge this year but the Health Check was worth doing and sets down our way forward for the next few years"* - Joan Swift, resident

*"The Health Check gave the team a really good opportunity to review and reflect their good work to date and to ensure we're able to continue to get the best out of Scrutiny going forward"* - Esther Clarson, Head of Customer Experience

*"I've really enjoyed getting involved with the scrutiny team again and doing this via Zoom is much easier for me"* - Mariantonia Armenante, resident

## Involved residents and Procurement

Over the year residents' involvement in the procurement services continued to grow

- 5 residents were trained in procurement by colleagues and became involved in evaluating and making decisions on the award of new contracts for gas and lifts maintenance
- Involved residents are working with staff to monitor the progress of our maintenance contracts

## Involved resident training

We held 6 training events for involved residents, which included a briefing from the Chief Executive, equality and diversity, social value, financial responsibilities, communication and social media and finally value for money.

This training was mainly offered to involved residents and according to Joan Swift our resident Chair "helped attendees learn more about what PA Housing's legal requirements are - and how this can impact on delivering services."

# Resident Involvement and Community Investment

**Resident Involvement and Community Investment continued to provide services mainly through virtual connections and over the year we:**

- Held 15 local forums
- Launched 2 new Resident Groups in Lewisham and Aylesbury to ensure the resident voice is heard in more areas
- Held 6 meetings of our Resident Council/Customer Forum
- Delivered online digital and financial inclusion courses
- Delivered two 12 week online training courses assisting residents to start their own business
- Launched a resident Complaints Panel and Equality and Diversity Group, both charged with ensuring that residents see real improvements in these areas

All of this meant we worked directly with **150** residents on ensuring that our services were still reaching residents and continued to improve and develop.

We also saw one of our longest serving Involved Residents be recognised for her work with the TPAS Lifetime Achievement award.



## The road to an Assembly

Our strategic resident groups are made up of around 20 to 30 involved residents, who meet at least 6 times a year. They work with our senior management team and Board to look at the quality of PA Housing's services, including resident satisfaction and service performance.

As a result of the lockdowns, these groups switched to jointly held virtual meetings. Over the last 3 months of the year these residents have been reviewing the structure of resident engagement and how we ensure the residents' voice is heard in every area of PA Housing. Following wider consultation at our forums a new structure was agreed and a single group of involved residents was formed - The PA Housing Resident Assembly.

Watch out for more information on this group and how you can be involved.

# Young people initiatives

The KT12 Football training project for youngsters is based in the Walton-on-Thames area in Surrey. Like many projects it was closed for most of the year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, during the late summer it was able to open and offer a very important service to local young people. Over 50 local children, mainly PA Housing residents, were involved in training between September and December.

We estimate that for every pound we spent on the KT12 project, we generated £119.70 in social value or value to our communities.

**The positive impacts on the young people taking part includes**

Increased self confidence

Good relationships formed with peers and coaches

Positive engagement and behaviour with the coaches, which challenged perceptions of poor behaviour in young people



## Support for residents with young children

PA Housing helps support two pre-schools in Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, which use our Community Hubs. Due to their locations, many of those accessing the pre-school services are PA Housing residents. At the start of the pandemic new COVID-19 secure rules were issued, which meant new ways of working for PA Housing and the pre-schools. The staff at both centres worked very hard in a very short space of time to address the concerns of parents and themselves.

The local community really values the pre-schools and the opportunities they provide.



# Neighbourhood Champions

Neighbourhood champions are residents that are passionate about where they live and want to help to make a difference in how PA Housing provides services in those areas. They work closely with PA Housing staff to help improve things and will meet with them on a regular basis to:

- Take part in estate inspections
- Report any communal repairs or issues of concern
- Suggest improvements for the local area
- Provide feedback on our contractors
- Get involved with Neighbourhood on Tour events throughout the year
- Help to organise community events, such as gardening, litter pickups or other events which would bring the Local area together

In 2020/21 Neighbourhood Coordinators carried out **11,737** estate inspections. Over the same period, **87** Inspections have been carried out by our **42** Neighbourhood Champions.

We are always recruiting new Champions. Go to [www.pahousing.co.uk/neighbourhoodchampions](http://www.pahousing.co.uk/neighbourhoodchampions) to find out more.

**Sandra**  
Neighbourhood Champion

# Neighbourhoods on Tour

Neighbourhoods on Tour provide an opportunity for our residents to come and meet our Neighbourhood Coordinators and PA Colleagues.

During 2020/21 the majority of our Tours were hosted virtually, where residents in a neighbourhood we contacted by phone. These calls sometimes provided the only contact residents had with the outside world and were seen as extremely beneficial to their wellbeing.

**217** Virtual Tours where we called all customers at specific sites

**2,827** residents contacted and engaged by Neighbourhood Coordinators



## Charitable Grants

The Community Investment Team regularly help residents to obtain charitable grants to assist them with any hardship needs they may be experiencing and cannot meet from their own funds or benefits. Grant awards can be obtained for various reasons including purchase of clothes, bedding, white goods, carpeting, garden clearances and many others.

In 2020/21 we assisted **36** residents to obtain charitable grants totalling **£22,000**



## Neighbourhood Improvement Fund

The Neighbourhood Improvement Fund provides PA Housing colleagues with the resource to deliver ideas that would benefit a scheme or neighbourhood. All the projects are developed with residents.

During 2020/21 the fund provided £114,327 to 118 different neighbourhoods or schemes. Items provided included noticeboards to aid communication, bike shelters, garden clearances, communal benches, gates, fencing, parking bays and lines, lighting and many other items that have proved to be a great benefit to all.

If you have any ideas to benefit your neighbourhood, speak to your Neighbourhood Coordinator.

## The Resident Voice Surveys

We use a range of surveys and media to ask our residents about our services and performance.

**17,857** customer feedback surveys completed

Feedback received on **11** Services (including repairs, gas servicing and repairs, income, complaints, grounds maintenance, cleaning and MyPA)

Survey results identify what residents think of our services and help us to focus on what matters most. One such area was Planned Maintenance.



## The Resident Voice Customer Journey Mapping

*"Customer Journey Mapping visualises the steps our residents take when engaging with our services"*

Following our surveys we used Customer Journey Mapping to review our Planned Maintenance Services

Customers engaged - **28**

Service Improvements identified - **20**

Service improvements made - **10** so far, with the other **10** to be completed by the end of May 2021

## The Resident Voice

The impact of  
Customer Journey Mapping

- The overall process reviewed and changed to make it easier for residents to access and engage with the service and team
- Access, refusals and hoarding processes have been reviewed and changed to better suit resident needs and concerns
- Other internal processes have been reviewed and changed to better meet resident requirements
- A new Service Standard document has been designed, ready for use in 2021
- Letters and communication are being reviewed to make them easier to understand

### This has led to

A **12%** increase in customer satisfaction

A reduction in complaints

## The Resident Voice lessons learnt

*"Lessons learnt is the rich insight that our residents provide us. We use lessons learnt to improve our services"*

During 2020/21 we recorded a total of 963 lessons learnt. The main themes were



### Communication

Includes prompt response, correct updates, clear instructions, expectations met



### Actions

The performance of staff when providing services



### Working

Standard of service, workmanship, a first time fix is needed



### Procedure

How our internal procedures impact on service delivery

The aim of lessons learnt is to ensure we don't keep making the same mistakes and we are taking action on them all.

# Enterprise CUBE

## Be Your Own Boss

Before the pandemic we delivered our employment courses in person. This wasn't possible through most of 2020/21 so we looked at ways that we could move support online.

Our partners Enterprise CUBE were set the challenge to deliver their award-winning face-to-face 'Be Your Own Boss' course online. We took the best bits of the physical course and combined that with a chunk of digital innovation and designed a brand new 12 week course offering residents an online, interactive programme of support delivered to their home.

The combination of classroom, one to one support and virtual on-demand learning worked well with 43 residents completing the course and 24 residents ready to start their business immediately with more to follow over the next 12 months.



# Enterprise CUBE

## The Impact of the course

One of the businesses that has been started as a result of the course sells creative face and body painting with 3 child and young person packages and an adult package, mainly for people attending festivals. The unique element of this business is that the child packages are customer/child-led experiences designed around children with ASD or other sensory needs. Children participate in creating the magic they desire.

### Other businesses created:

- Three food business – Mexican, Indian & Vegan
- Two cleaning businesses
- Visual Content Creator
- Fashion Designer
- Cosmetic designer & manufacturer
- Weight loss consultant
- Hair product designer and manufacturer
- On-line sales business
- Beauty consultant
- Cyber security consultant
- Interior designers and upcycling



## Employment Support

As our face-to-face employment support had to stop due to the pandemic, so we looked at changing the ways that we could support our residents, assisting them to be able to compete in a very challenging jobs market.

In total we were able to help **101** residents with employment support during 2020/21.

Supporting someone into employment can have a profound effect on not just them, but their families and the wider community.

We estimate that for every pound we spent on employment support, we generated £66 in social value or value to our communities.

## The Naumann Initiative

In September 2020, we became the first housing association in England to adopt the Naumann Initiative, which aims to break the vicious circle of homelessness and unemployment by simultaneously giving a homeless individual a home, a job, and support with any complex needs or barriers to sustaining their tenancy. We launched the initiative by offering recruitment to two full-time roles. The recruitment was so successful, that we ended up hiring four individuals, all of whom were incredibly strong candidates. We estimate that for every pound we spent on the Naumann Initiative, we generated £10 in social value or value to our communities.

*"There are few things more important than a safe and secure home, and a permanent job with opportunities to start building a career. By providing both as a package we're giving people who have experienced homelessness the chance to get back on their feet and show what they can do."* - Simon Hatchman, Executive Director - Resources



# Contractors and Social Value

When we take on new contractors to provide our services, they agree to provide wider positive benefits or social value for our communities. This can take the form of offering apprenticeships or work placements to local residents or taking part in local projects, education or supplying equipment.

Like most areas, 2020/21 has been a difficult time for our contractors, and many planned engagements were put on hold, however, they have still been able to provide at least 11 apprenticeships throughout the year.

## They have also been involved in:



Welfare packs for residents suffering hardship



Free decoration of communal areas



Donations to local social events including for Diwali, Christmas and Easter



Food donations to local Foodbanks



Supermarket vouchers for housing support and homeless charities

# PA in Bloom

Like many other things, PA in Bloom went virtual in 2020. We adapted the competition so that participants took photos of their entries and a number of staff helped the residents to judge them. Whilst we had fewer entries than usual, 22 in total, the quality was as high and stunning as ever.

The overall winners were Paul and Ann Hardy from Beaumont Leys who commented

*"We are absolutely delighted to have been chosen as the overall winner this year, especially as it has been even more testing than usual with what's happening in our crazy world"*

# Complaints

Our complaints process has been through a number of changes over recent years in an effort to make it easier to use and improve the customer experience.

As a result of customer satisfaction research, the Housing Ombudsman self-assessment, and direct customer feedback (including from those who had been through our complaints process), we knew there were some key areas we needed to improve on. We have introduced a new complaints approach and we were keen to involve customers to ensure this focuses on the right things.

We launched a Residents Complaints Panel on the 23 March 2021. Initially meeting monthly, the panel

is comprised of 10 residents, alongside representation from the Customer Experience, and wider PA management team.

The panel will ensure our residents voice is at the forefront of our new complaints approach, providing us with feedback, counsel, recommendations, and guidance. Residents will be involved in working with us to regularly review complaints performance, and will influence our policies and processes in order to improve the services we offer.

We look forward to updating you on the progress of our Complaints Panel throughout the year.

If you want to become involved in working with PA Housing to improve your neighbourhood or the services you receive or you just want to be a part of some of our initiatives contact the Resident Involvement Team at **[getinvolved@pahousing.co.uk](mailto:getinvolved@pahousing.co.uk)** or call them via **0300 123 2221**.

If you want more information on the employment or digital courses we run, please contact the Community Investment Team at **[interested@pahousing.co.uk](mailto:interested@pahousing.co.uk)** or call them via **0300 123 2221**.