

life

anchor

Spring 2024



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Listening on location...

Building local links to benefit our residents

Hello and welcome...

...to Life, our resident magazine.

As a large, national organisation, it's important that as colleagues we work closely together and listen to each other.

With that in mind, our housing and property senior leadership team recently visited locations across the country, including Hull, Manchester, Essex and Gloucester. We've spent time with our local managers and got involved in hands-on tasks, including inspecting properties to ensure they're ready to let, raising repairs and a whole range of everyday duties.

Visits to our locations are always insightful. Crucially, they provide opportunities for me and my senior team to hear from residents and colleagues about their experiences and for those views to inform any changes we make.

We were also fortunate enough to be



Above: Suki with Scheme Manager Debra Lewis

Cover: Director of Customer Experience Dan Rhodes and Location Manager Lauren Scriven

welcomed by many of our residents during our visits and hope to meet many more when we're on location again throughout the year.

You can find out more about how you can ensure your voice influences how we work on p9 and about our Resident Inclusion Community on p12.

Suki Jandu, Executive Director - Housing Services

Life magazine is also available online at www.Anchor.org.uk/Resident-Publications

Please speak to your local manager or our Customer Experience Hub on 0800 731 2020* if you need audio or large print versions.

Anchor is the trading name of Anchor Hanover Group, which is a charitable housing association with registered society No 7843. Registered Provider No. LH4095.

*There are several different phone numbers within this magazine. Calls to 0800 and 0300 numbers are usually free. Please check with your phone provider as charges for calls to other numbers may vary or be included within your call package.

Send your feedback about Life magazine to:

Life@Anchor.org.uk

or write to: Life, Anchor, 2 Godwin Street, Bradford, BD1 2ST



Update on transforming repairs and planned works



Ensuring repairs and planned works are done well and cost-effectively for you is a top priority. So, as we shared last year, we're planning a change to how we deliver these services in 2025.

Across our locations, repairs and planned works are delivered differently. This means we have differing levels of service as well as the challenge of managing different contracts, contractor performance and health and safety.

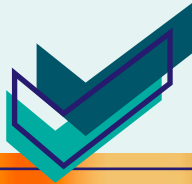
We're planning to enter long-term agreements with a number of contractors who will deliver both repairs and planned works in designated areas. This will allow contractors to really get to know our locations and deliver a sustainable service that is right for our residents.

Resident feedback has been key at every step and will continue. We're speaking to our resident groups, looking at satisfaction results and have carried out research about what works well and what doesn't.

All housing residents had the opportunity to share their feedback as part of a formal 'Section 20' consultation. We received observations from 166 locations, and these are informing the next steps for deciding on the contractors. We also have residents helping assess submissions from prospective contractors as part of our process.

Later this year, once the process has completed, we'll write to you again telling you more about our proposed contractors. You'll be able to make comments before the contracts are signed.

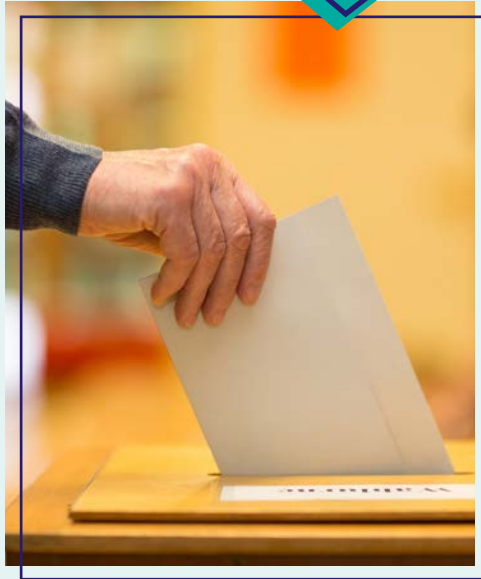
Are you ready to vote?



Whether it's the next general, local or Police and Crime Commissioner election, everyone now needs to show valid identification to be able to cast their vote at the polling station.

As well as a passport or driving licence, a Blue Badge, disabled or older person's bus pass are all valid identification. If you don't have these or the photo no longer looks like you, your local council can provide a Voter Authority Certificate to show instead.

You can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate at www.gov.uk or your local Electoral Registration Office can support you with your application.



What is a Lasting Power of Attorney?

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) can be helpful when you need help with bills, bank accounts, or personal care due to physical difficulties or no longer having mental capacity.

With an LPA, you appoint one or more people over 18 as attorneys to make decisions or carry out your affairs on your behalf. You can have an LPA covering Health and Welfare or Property and Financial Affairs, or both and can cancel or replace them at any time.

It currently costs £82 to register an LPA yourself. Getting a solicitor to register it will cost more but they can also provide advice and information.

The Office of the Public Guardian provides information at www.lastingpowerofattorney.service.gov.uk/home or by calling **0300 456 0300*** (Textphone: **0115 934 2778***).



Support when you need it most



If you're facing difficulties paying for essential items, such as food, energy, white goods, carpets or emergency provisions, due to limited funds or unexpected expenses, our Resident Support Fund may be able to help.

Since January last year, we've helped more than 1,200 residents buy essentials with vouchers issued through the fund. Here's what two residents who've used the fund said:

"I'm able to use my heating without worrying about how I'm going to pay for it."

"It's relieved the worry and stress of moving into a new place."

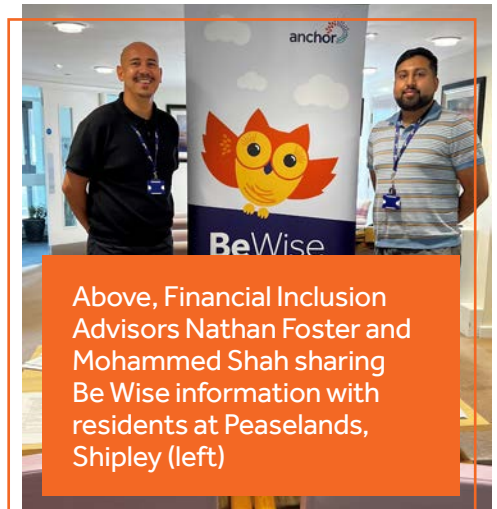
You may be eligible for the fund if you're struggling to meet the cost of essential items and have limited income and savings. The Be Wise Team will also talk to you about your benefit entitlement and/or ways in which you could save money on your

regular expenditure.

In most cases, the fund provides support through supermarket or energy vouchers. Each household can access a limited cash equivalent of each voucher type within a 12-month period. There's also an allowance of up to £60 for warm winter clothing.

Applying for our Resident Support Fund is simple - just use one of the following options:

- Speak to your local manager, who can check if you're eligible and make an application for you
- Complete the form online at www.Anchor.org.uk/Cost-Living-Support
- Call our Be Wise Team free and confidentially on **0800 023 4477***
- Email SupportFund@Anchor.org.uk

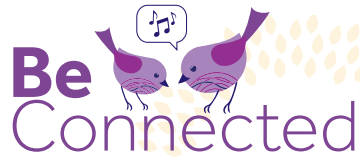


Above, Financial Inclusion Advisors Nathan Foster and Mohammed Shah sharing Be Wise information with residents at Peaslands, Shipley (left)



Building friendships

For those who love to make new connections and friendships, **Be Connected**, part of our **Be Well** wellbeing services, is a great way to do just that. **Be Connected** offers a range of initiatives to make it easier to make friends and meet more people:



Face-to-face

- **Chatty Benches** – Benches with one of our 'Chatty Bench' plaques show that anyone sitting there is happy to chat with whoever sits next to them. You can request a plaque for benches at any of our locations through your local manager or emailing BeWell@anchor.org.uk

Local Manager Nadiya Pavliv, Resident Involvement and Wellbeing Manager Sarah Turner, Resident Wellbeing Lead Lauren Smith and Chief Executive Sarah Jones launching our latest 'Chatty Bench' at Westfield Shopping Centre in Shepherd's Bush, London.



Felicity, pictured with fellow resident Dawn at John Ellis Court in Hayle, says: "I never really sat outside but since the Chatty Bench has been here I find myself on a nice day sitting on it and people just naturally sit next to me and start talking. It's a fantastic idea that brings people together."

Online or by phone

- **Together Choir** – Taking place online over Zoom and phone every month and led by a choir master, our choir provides an opportunity for residents across the country to sing fun and well-known songs together or simply listen
- **Book Club** – Meeting online over Zoom and phone every six weeks, our virtual Book Club community spend an hour talking about their favourite books, genres and authors
- **Virtual coffee mornings** – Pop the kettle on, dial in by phone or Zoom and hear from a variety of guest speakers as well as other residents. Our virtual coffee mornings take place every Tuesday at 11 am.

By phone

- **Reengage** – Reengage provide a call companion service for people over 75 who would enjoy extra company provided by a friendly phone call every week or two
- **NHS Check In & Chat** – This is a national short-term telephone befriending support service available to anyone over 18.

Letter, email or phone

- **Pen Pals** – If you want to make a new friend and learn about their experiences, hobbies, interests and future plans, our Pen Pal scheme is a great option. Whether you'd prefer a letter, email, or phone pen pal, we'll pair you with a likeminded resident to get you started.



For more information on how to access or get involved with any of these initiatives, or to receive a digital or printed version of our Friendship activity pack, please email BeWell@anchor.org.uk or call **07523 943501*** during working hours. And if you've made great friendships with other Anchor residents, do get in touch and share your story with us.



Listening to our residents



One of the Board meetings attended by Heather Rowell and Sarah Jones

Be Involved
listening and acting

Residents' voices influence Anchor's Board in many ways, with Board members making 181 location visits last year, with more happening in 2024.

The 11 members, including Chief Executive Sarah Jones and Chairman Christopher Kemball, bring skills from many industries - including construction, retail, finance, local government and other housing associations and charities.

Members also join Residents' Council meetings and ensure resident feedback informs how our organisation works. For example, members of our Resident Voice Panel joined focus groups to help develop our sustainability strategy, which was discussed by our Residents' Council.

Sarah Jones said: "We're so grateful to those who respond to surveys and meet us through visits and our

involvement groups. The response on sustainability was really helpful and I hope the Environmental Forum created as a result will support us to continue to improve in this area."

Resident Chair of our Environmental Forum and member of the Residents' Council, Heather Rowell (below), said: "I feel I've helped influence Anchor's direction and strategy as a whole.

"We have the opportunity to question Sarah, Anchor's Chief Executive, on initiatives and make suggestions. We work with Anchor to improve and develop services. Each meeting we question senior management, so we know regulatory standards are being maintained."



"Following resident feedback, I got the opportunity to help set up the Environmental Forum. Even though our homes are a sanctuary, the world outside is still very much our concern. This is felt, I believe, within Anchor's Board. We, as a community, have the wisdom and experience to find ways to reduce our carbon footprint, conserve our resources and leave a legacy of sustainability. I believe, with the Environmental Forum, Anchor and its residents can be a lead for all housing associations to aspire to."

Add your voice

If you care about the service Anchor residents experience, why not share your views to help inform or improve it?

From occasional or regular virtual meetings, being on focus groups or feeding back by email, you're welcome to share your views on our service by joining one of our resident groups - just like Heather on p8.

Passionate about how safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly your homes are, or have views on our communications, such as this magazine? Is holding us to account, ensuring fairness or being inclusive important to you? Please get in touch to Be Involved and let your voice shape Anchor.

Why join a group?

If you care about the experience of those living with Anchor, you can help shape or change it by joining a group and sharing your views.

Do we listen?

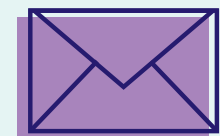
Absolutely. A lot of effort goes into listening to our residents through focus groups and our resident groups.

Do changes happen as a result?

Yes. Searching questions from the groups led to us revising our approach for some initiatives. The combined new-look 'Annual Review for Residents' was heavily influenced by resident feedback. And many of the topics included in the newsletter templates our local managers use, are a direct result of the groups' suggestions.

Get in touch if you'd like to Be Involved

Email BeInvolved@anchor.org.uk or write to our Resident Involvement and Wellbeing Team, 2 Godwin Street, Bradford, BD1 2ST



Did you know?



We use a range of social media sites to share news and events from all over Anchor. If you're online, why not visit our pages?

We're on Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter) and Instagram (@anchorlaterlife). Facebook and X are great places for you to see what residents are up to at all of our locations.

Many of our housing locations and care homes also have their own social media accounts, where they share the wonderful things their residents and colleagues are doing throughout the year. These can be found on their individual care home or housing location page on our website www.anchor.org.uk.



Love is in the care

That was the conclusion on Valentine's Day, after tales of love shared by couples from some of our care homes featured on television and in newspapers.

From lovebirds Arthur and Maureen Cawood and their budgie, Billy at Oulton Manor care home in Leeds, to a remarkable nine couples at our The Manor House care home in Harrogate.

One of those couples, Geoff Fawcett and Kathleen Wainwright, got engaged in November after meeting in summer.

Their Home Manager, Stephanie Foulds said: "With so many social activities



and events taking place, romantic relationships can blossom and we support people to continue to enjoy their lives."

Find your nearest Anchor care home at www.Anchor.org.uk/Care-Homes or speak to your local manager.

What's your passion?



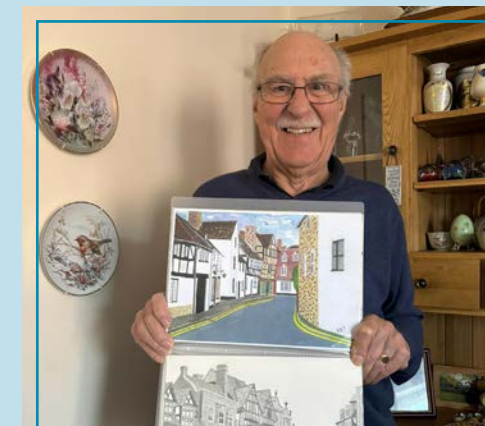
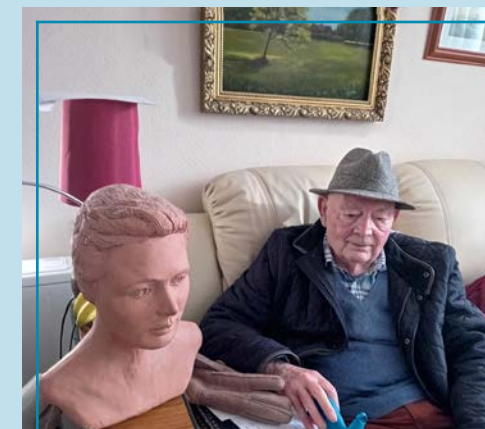
It's time to focus on some of our creative residents, as they share what's keeping them busy.

Resident Gary Wynne has become a regular sight in the shared lounge at Lawman Gardens in Derbyshire. A keen fan of Lego, every day Gary uses the table in the shared lounge to build Lego and other models, impressing residents and visitors with his creations. Titanic and Concorde are just two of the 18 models Gary's completed since moving to the location after a difficult time. Gary said: "It gives me a sense of purpose and I enjoy chatting with residents and visitors."

Someone else who enjoys being creative is retired London cabbie John Redhead, from Bowes Lyon Close, Windsor. John has found creating art, such as the sculpture of his much-loved daughter Jo-Ann and paintings, to be a great form of relaxation and creativity away from the London bustle.

Another keen artist is Trevor Twaite, from Treacher Court, Twyford, who enjoys trying different techniques and materials. "I started drawing when I retired. I find it very therapeutic, which allows me to relax and feel better about everything."

Have you got an interesting or unusual hobby you're happy to share in Life magazine? Please get in touch by emailing Life@Anchor.org.uk or speaking to your local manager.



Our community championing inclusion



We want everyone to feel welcome, whoever they are and whatever their background.

Working with members of our Resident Inclusion Community, we've created some tools to help achieve this. This includes updated diversity and inclusion training on Be Skilled, our online learning resource for residents.

Members will also be getting involved in Pride, Black History Month, and National Inclusion Week. Resident Cathy (right) became a member as she believes: "We all have a part to play



in making inclusion a full reality".

Email ResidentEDI@anchor.org.uk or speak to your local manager to join or find out more about this community.

Teagan and Henry - our Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Team, have a podcast discussing news articles and people championing D&I. You can listen to it at www.Anchor.org.uk/didigest or by searching Spotify for 'D&I Digest'.



Your wellbeing

It's useful to be aware of symptoms, prevention and treatment when it comes to health conditions. Vera, a resident from Alton, suggested the condition we're highlighting here.

Osteoporosis

Developing slowly, Osteoporosis weakens bones and makes them more likely to break.

Common injuries

Osteoporosis is usually diagnosed after a fall or knock results in a broken bone. Broken bones in the spine can also cause some older people to

stoop (bend over from the shoulders).

Certain medication or a family history of Osteoporosis can increase the likelihood of developing it. Bone strengthening medicines, regular exercise and a healthy diet may be used for prevention or treatment.

Help and advice



Always speak to your GP about any health concerns. The Royal Osteoporosis Society provide lots of information and support at www.theros.org.uk or their helpline: **0808 800 0035***.