



# CBHnews

**SUMMER 2022**



**Your latest annual report is here!**  
**Where's Wally?**  
**Congrats to our photo stars**

**FREEPHONE** 0800 408 0000  
**VISIT** [cbh.org](http://cbh.org)



# WE'RE READY FOR THE NEXT STEP

– TO BRING **MORE** NEW HOMES TO CHELTENHAM



**In the last edition of CBHnews we let you know about our plans to bring new high energy performance homes to 320 Swindon Road, following approval from Cheltenham Borough Council's planning committee.**

In the coming months we will be going out to tender to procure a contractor to build these new homes, which have been designed to be net zero carbon in response to the council's climate emergency.

Solar panels and low carbon construction are part of the design, and green roofs will provide homes with a more natural living environment.

Outside space has been put aside for trees and greenery, making room available for hedgehog highways, bat, bee, and bird boxes to allow biodiversity to flourish too.

Following the tendering process, the intention is for the main building works to commence early 2023.

One of the ways we are supporting Cheltenham Borough Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030. Find out other ways on page 11.

**COVER PHOTO:** Our wonderful photo stars Shelley and her daughter Rosie-May get creative (see page 4)





# WHERE'S WALLY?

Here he is! Meet our newest recruit, 9 month old cocker spaniel Wally. Vince who works closely with families across Cheltenham to make sure they've got the right support to thrive, is helping Wally with his training to become a fully-fledged therapy dog – he provides some words below:

*"I'm working with Wally to help him become a therapy or trauma dog so he can help me in my work to support people with complex needs and who are dealing with traumatic experiences. He has completed his puppy training and has now started further training before he is ready to qualify as a therapy dog. This will depend on how he fares with his training.*

*He has character and loves people. The aim for Wally over the next year is to go meet*



*different people – if you see him please feel free to come say hello – but only if he is calm and in his bed. That being said as a young cocker he is excitable and needs to learn that he can't love everyone. He has already become quite a well known member of the team here at CBH."*

*Keep your eyes peeled on our social media channels – we'll let you know how he gets on.*

## HAVE YOU USED MYCBH YET?

There is an easy way to check your rent statement, make a payment, tell us how we're doing and much, much more?

If you haven't signed up yet, it won't take up too much of your time.

All you need is your tenancy number (this can be found on your rent statement), your email address and date of birth.

For more info visit page 19, contact us at [housing@cbh.org](mailto:housing@cbh.org) or call 0800 408 0000



# HOORAY!

## WE MADE THE FINALS

In April we received the exciting news our two entries had been shortlisted in the National Federation of Almos (NFA) #pullingtogether photography competition.

Although there were no wins this year for us, our amazing customers, colleagues, and partners involved did fantastically well to get shortlisted.

You can check out these amazing photos here.

**MONKSCROFT ACTION GROUP  
(MAG)**



**SHELLEY (LEFT) AND ROSIE-MAY  
(RIGHT) - FACEBOOK LIVE SESSIONS**



“ ....It is always nice to receive national recognition for our project, which started out so small and ran on a shoestring budget.

As we get bigger and do outreach work with other communities, and begin to attract more funding, we will continue to follow our founding principles, that there should be no stigma to living in social housing, and that our residents are overwhelmingly law-abiding with talents and potential that has never been brought into the light. We mean to change that and are very grateful for the support we have received from all levels of CBH.

”

Ian, Chair of the MAG

**Huge congratulations to the winner and to all the other finalists.  
Photography by Clint Randall at Pixel PR Photography.**

# MASSIVE CONGRATULATIONS TO CHLOE

**Our inspirational and talented apprentice Chloe was recently nominated for student of the year in the Women in Property South West Awards**

Debbie, her mentor and colleague, said "I'm passionate about growing talent in the field of surveying and Chloe is a fantastic example of this. She has worked very hard and has done exceptionally well at University. We are so pleased this has been recognised. When she was nominated, Chloe had to deliver a presentation on a project and sit an interview, so this really is a fantastic recognition of all her hard work to progress as a surveyor. Massive well done to Chloe from us all at CBH"

Here at CBH we understand the challenges faced with retaining and recruiting the right people who share our values and passion for people. We care about you and your family which is why we are continuously looking at new ways to enhance our recruitment process. We were really excited when Chloe expressed that she would like to undertake a Building Surveying degree, enabling us to 'grow our own' surveyor."



We are delighted Chloe has excelled on her course and has been recognised in this way – for more information on our latest jobs visit [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org)



**Chloe (left) and Debbie (right) celebrating her amazing achievement.**



# Your Annual Report 2021/22 is here!



## A message from our chief executive, Steve



It's hard to believe another year has flown by. One thing that's remained the same is the incredible people who continue to go the extra mile to make a difference to thousands of lives across Cheltenham. I'm proud to work with amazing individuals who embrace CBH's neighbourly approach, putting you and your family first.

At CBH your voice matters and changes the way we do things. Having a safe and secure place to call home is important to both you and us which is why we're embracing technology to help us carry out more repairs every day. Our recent telephone survey highlighted 72% of you were satisfied we listen and act on your views, but we won't rest until this number rises.

As the council's arms-length management organisation (ALMO) we're doing what we can to support their aim to be net zero carbon and ensure new, and existing homes are energy efficient. We're trying out some new ways to reduce our carbon impact and help drive down costs for you. Together we can all do our part to reduce our carbon footprint (see page 11).

As you know we're passionate about creating stronger and safer neighbourhoods, reducing isolation and working with local partners to deliver opportunities for learning and to bring people together.

In partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council, we continue to have an impact with focusing on health and wellbeing, community safety, education training and skills to help make Cheltenham an even better place.

# Our colleagues really do care about people



“

I really enjoy making a difference to the lives of people... and love working for a company that puts my wellbeing first...

”

CBH colleague

Empowering you and supporting strong, vibrant communities is what our colleagues are all about. They really do care about you and your family, and will do what they can to make sure you get the support you need.

## Putting you first

Your wellbeing is important to us.

Our **Help2 project**, set up by our colleagues, has continued to work closely with partners to make sure anyone going through significant hardship is able to get the help they need through providing:



benefit and money advice to those struggling financially



training to help find work



household goods



quality flooring and furniture from Cheltenham Flooring and British Heart Foundation

## Last year we:



helped **51** people dealing with difficult circumstances

using **£12,000** worth of donated funds

and an additional **£1,000** secured from John Lewis

**At CBH we focus on the person when it comes to recruiting and are committed to attracting and retaining individuals who share our values and passion for people.**

## Our people plan

We understand happier colleagues who love working here because they are listened to, have a great work-life balance and ability to help others through the work they do.

So they can continue to provide vital services and look after you and your family, sometimes they need help too. We have a dedicated team of colleagues who are qualified wellbeing champions to make sure they are able to get the support they need so they can continue to put you first.

### We also provide:



Regular 'time to talk' sessions so colleagues can talk about things that matter to them



Menopause café to spread awareness and provide the right support



Access to wellbeing courses and services to provide a healthy work-life balance



Our colleagues really do care - don't just take our word for it, our customers said:

“

**I was able to do this because of your support, I never thought I could do this. Thank you very much, I am very proud of what I have done**

CBH customer

”

“

**They helped me out of a very tricky situation following a divorce... they have given me a home and let me live as if it is my own. They have always been quick to respond if I have had an issue. I am very satisfied**

CBH customer

”



# We understand the value of home



“

My house is warm, repairs are carried out very quickly, contact with them is easy and their response is quick. Great landlords

”

CBH customer

Your safety remains our top priority which is why each year we carry out thousands of responsive repairs and planned works to make sure the 4617 homes we manage are safe and secure.

We continue to work closely with Cheltenham Borough Council to supply more affordable homes to meet the demand; and are committed to looking at new ways to make both new and existing homes more energy efficient. This is all part of our **£180m investment in quality homes and thriving communities.**

## Repairs to your home

We spent £4.7m on maintaining and repairing homes and achieved the following:



**99.6%**  
**of 5,713**

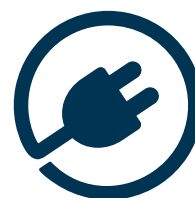
emergency, urgent and responsive repairs completed on time



We responded to

**559**

emergency repairs at night or over the weekend



We carried out

**846**

electrical tests to keep customers safe and secure in their homes



Your feedback is helping us provide you with the highest standard of customer service. This is important as we want you and your family to feel happy in your home - read all about the vital role your voice plays on page 19.

## You told us...

repairs to your home were taking longer than normal

## So we...



Reallocated resources to improve and introduced a new process to speed up getting materials. This has reduced the number of trips we make – saving time and reducing our carbon footprint. All in all, we save time, our impact on the environment, and get the job done quicker.



Are piloting a new way of working to bring you later appointment slots. Providing you with more opportunities to book a repair appointment.



Changed the way we use technology, making it easier to keep tabs on materials. This has led to less visits to the store and more time to look after you and your home. We're now able to carry out more repairs each day and deliver the services you need to keep your home safe and secure.

**Keep talking to us - visit page 19**



**I just think they are very good with their repairs and they are good with their timings, all the staff are very nice over the phone**



CBH customer

## We're committed to supporting Cheltenham Borough Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030

Last year we spent **£1.8m** to improve the energy efficiency of homes.



We're always looking at new ways to improve energy efficiency and to help you reduce your fuel bills

We secured

**£40K**

worth of funding as part of a pilot study to carry out deep retrofitting of two homes and further funding to improve the energy efficiency of homes during 2022/23 - see page 22

**Last year we spent £5.1m on improving homes. We want you to feel safe in your home:**

**99.95%**

homes had a current gas safety certificate

**99.6%**

homes had a current electrical inspection certificate

**100%**

blocks have current fire risk assessments and asbestos surveys carried out

## Supplying more high quality homes for Cheltenham

**34** 

Number of new affordable homes we built to provide families with more opportunities to find their homes through social rent and shared ownership

**26** 

homes acquired on the open market, making good use of the money received from properties sold under the right to buy scheme

Worked in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council to provide

**13**

newly refurbished homes for private rent to provide people with more choice in finding a home that is high quality where they can feel happy and safe and secure



**Part of the £180m investment in Cheltenham's future made by Cheltenham Borough Council and delivered by Cheltenham Borough Homes, to increase the supply of new and affordable housing throughout the town**





# Helping communities thrive is what we're all about



“

Thank you to the CBH team and the Gloucestershire Police officers who worked so hard to make our neighbourhood safe and peaceful again. I have had the best weekends sleep in years...

”

CBH customer

**We're passionate about creating stronger, vibrant and resilient communities where you and your family can thrive. We do this by working closely with local partners, including Cheltenham Borough Council, our highlights include:**



#### **Putting your wellbeing first**

- providing colleagues with training to become qualified counsellors, making a positive difference to vulnerable families and people dealing with trauma across Cheltenham



#### **Providing an inclusive community**

- working closely with GARAS to make sure resettled families' needs are being met as far as possible. This includes Syrian and Afghan families moving to Cheltenham



#### **Creating a town where**

**everyone thrives** - successfully resolved **68** antisocial behaviour cases. Worked proactively with partners such as Cheltenham Borough Council, Police and Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour in the community and organised drug crime in our neighbourhoods



#### **Continued, out of hours work**

to reassure families and support our work in specific areas



#### **Training up therapy dog Wally**

- see page 3



**We're passionate about reducing social isolation and resilience within your communities and work closely with local partners to deliver face to face and virtual opportunities for learning and meeting up with others - we achieved the following:**

Secured

**£5,300**

worth of funding to support community groups and bring people together



Over

**300**



customers involved in meetings and activities that directly influence our services



**3,969**

times people attended our events



**16**

Facebook live sessions receiving

**2,278**

views



### **You told us...**

you missed social events that took place at sheltered schemes

### **So we...**

restarted these with coffee mornings, afternoon teas and other activities. To find out more about events within your scheme please contact your housing support officer or call 0800 408 0000

**Your views matter - visit page 19**



## Our focus is you. We will do what we can to help you maintain and stay in your home by working with you to identify and engage with the right support

We work closely with local partners including Cheltenham Borough Council to help the most vulnerable households to secure a long-term home they can sustain and provide housing and homelessness services for the whole of Cheltenham

### We want you to feel safe in your home:

Last year we visited

# 819

homes to check on the wellbeing of our customers, making sure they get the advice and support they need



Continued to support families with hoarding by working closely with local partners, to provide the help they need to free up space, making their home safer and a place they can enjoy living in



Helped

# 26

people, who were looking to downsize into a smaller home that better meets their needs, making the process as stress free and easy as possible to free up much needed homes for families in need of more space



Number of people we helped access the right support so they were no longer at risk of losing their home and in a position where they can sustain their tenancy





“

...thank you for not giving up on me. You didn't give up on me when I turned you away.... The help to identify benefit issues, applying for help to support my rent shortfall and my new cooker is all amazing. I haven't had a cooker for over two years. I am so grateful. I made myself boiled potatoes, sausages, and garlic bread. I know you might laugh, I'm clearly not a chef but it was delicious! – Thank you

”

CBH customer

## Providing solutions to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping.

### We provided the following support for our customers:



Our 10 year partnership with the Illegal Money Lending team remains strong and over the last decade we've secured funds totaling

# £16k

We continue to work closely with the team to help raise awareness of the risk of loan sharks across Cheltenham



**To make sure our most vulnerable customers get the help they need to thrive,** we re-introduced face to face benefit and money advice support once it was safe to do so, following the pandemic



More than

# £31,000

secured from local partners to help our customers experiencing significant hardship

### Helped customers:

Claim

# £1.1m

of additional benefits

Clear

# £50,000

of arrears



“

We offer free and confidential advice on all welfare benefits and day to day money management, including a free benefit and budget calculation. To know that I play a key role within the team in how people are living and when I can see what a difference a few changes can make to an individual or family is so rewarding

”

Suzanne, CBH Benefit and Money Advisor (BMA)

**We work closely with our partners at Cheltenham Borough Council to provide housing and homelessness advice for the whole of Cheltenham.**



**216**

Number of individuals and families we helped remain in their homes or find a place to stay to prevent homelessness



We continue to work closely with local partners to come up with solutions to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, helping

**37**

people move from supported housing to a place they can live independently



The first of its kind in Gloucestershire, our work in housing interventions is providing support for people with complex needs across the county

We helped families across Cheltenham claim

**£1.4m**

of additional income

**383**

Families housed in Cheltenham through homeseekerplus

Able to help an additional **34**

people find a place to stay through our enhanced practice provision - keeping them off the streets

**Secured additional funding from Gloucestershire County Council to continue our work in housing interventions and domestic abuse, helping vulnerable people get the right help to keep them safe and secure.**



You don't need to go through this alone, talk to us on **0800 408 0000** or email **safeguarding@cbh.org**



**I'm passionate about helping people and making sure they feel safe in their homes. Looking at solutions, including providing support to help reduce the chances of anyone becoming homeless due to domestic abuse is a huge part of my role here at CBH.**

**No one should have to live in fear or suffer from abuse. It can be difficult to leave when you feel you have nowhere to go, so if you are in an abusive relationship or unsure of the signs and what the next steps are, I'm here to help you.**

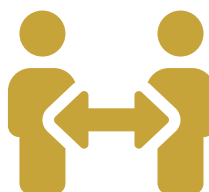
Kella, CBH Domestic Abuse Interventions Officer



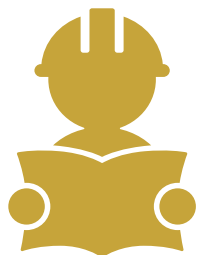
## Helping people into work, training and education:



Made it easier for people to achieve their chosen career by providing more training and employment opportunities



Brought back face to face training and employment sessions following the pandemic to deliver further support to those with complex needs



Provided work experience to help students attain the skills they need to achieve their dream of working in the construction industry



Worked with local partners to help young people secure the life changing support they need to kickstart their careers and achieve paid employment

### Helped:



**93**  
into work



**143**  
into training

**100%**  
satisfaction achieved

**“ I didn't think I would be able to get the job I wanted, now I enjoy work and have more money to spend. I am no longer stressed at work ”**

CBH customer



## Surprised our Thrive graduate Ollie...

with a gift package to support his development and to acknowledge his enormous achievements. Ollie has been an apprentice with Cheltenham Flooring and CBH since September 2019.

Thanks to the invaluable support from our local partners we were able to provide Ollie with his own range of work tools as he works more independently and takes on greater work responsibilities.



## During 2021/22:



We answered

**45,762** calls,  
with **92%** of calls answered  
in under **60** seconds



**90**  
compliments

## We don't always get things right

This is why your feedback is important to us, as it helps us resolve the situation, respond to your views and improve. This is why we want to make it as easy as possible for you to tell us how we're doing.

## Last year:



**36** complaints  
and we upheld  
**30** of these



On average it took us  
**10** days to respond  
to each stage one complaint  
– we were able to close  
**96%** within these  
timescales

## Did you know you can keep in touch with MyCBH?

It's an easy and quick way to:



pay your rent



book your own repair  
(non-emergency)



check your  
rent statement



view your own  
account details



refer yourself for some  
benefit and money advice



contact your tenancy  
management and  
ASB officer

You can do this 24/7 all in the comfort of your own home.

# Your voice matters

We want to make sure we are providing you with the support you and your family need - this is why we run quarterly telephone reviews, carried out by Acuity. This is one of the many ways you can have your say and share your experiences. Although 72% of you are satisfied we listen to views and act on them, your input continues to play a crucial role in helping us improve and support those people who need it the most.

Thank you to everyone who has taken part - during 2021 - 2022 we had a fantastic **1016** responses. Want to know how we did? See below:

**84%**

of people said they are happy overall with CBH

**76%**

satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service

**90%**

of people thought their rent was value for money

**85%**

of people feel safe and secure in their home

**84%**

of people found it easy to get hold of the right person

**86%**

of people are happy with the quality of their home

**72%**

satisfied we listen to views and act on them

**We're committed to listening and acting to improve. A massive thank you to everyone who has taken the time to share feedback via our surveys or calls.**

# Making sure your voice is heard

To make sure we provide the services you deserve, we give you a variety of ways to get involved, share your ideas, and have your say. Our Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP) act on your behalf to help scrutinise and challenge us. A huge part of this includes carrying out surveys and feedback groups to make sure your voice is heard.

## Edwin, TSIP Chair provides some words:



“ It’s been a another challenging year in many ways, with the after effects of the pandemic having had a huge impact on us all, however our dedication has not stopped. As a panel we have remained focused on working closely with our CBH colleagues and members of the Board to make sure your voices are heard.

The scrutiny work we do is so important as it helps us understand how CBH works and runs its services. Being a member of TSIP is a fantastic opportunity to influence this. It’s a really exciting time as we look to the future and feedback on items like the customer engagement plan. Looking at even more opportunities for you to share your views. This has been a fantastic experience for us to work closely with the CBH Board - further strengthening our commitment to putting your thoughts at the forefront of our future plans.

I would like to thank all CBH customers who have been involved with CBH and within their local neighbourhoods over the last 12 months. TSIP are excited about the year ahead and look forward to both continuing and expanding our work with CBH.

I’d also like to take this opportunity to say, thank you and good luck to Sarah Godfrey, as she takes up her new position as CBH tenant board member.

”



# Some of the areas the TSIP have influenced include:

## Customer Engagement

Making sure there are a variety of ways for you to have your say in how the services you receive can be improved. Helping us better understand how we are performing and what we can do to ensure we are meeting the needs of you and your communities.

## Making a difference to customers

Attended an event and provided feedback to the Regulator of Social Housing to help shape the regulation of social housing. TSIP made sure the voice of CBH customers was brought to the table to ensure new regulations are relevant and useful.



## A note from Jason, Chair of the Board:



Your voices are heard at Board through our tenant Board members, your survey responses and complaints, and through TSIP members who attend Board meetings to provide reports and updates.

This is so important because what you are saying influences our decisions and the ways in which the company develops. You help us to stay focused on what really matters to you.



# At the heart of CBH - is you

**You** are influencing our exciting plans for the future and we want to make sure we provide lots of opportunities for you to share your ideas.

Our amazing colleagues who everyday go the extra mile to look after and support our communities are also helping us provide the services you need. It doesn't end there, we're always looking to improve where we can to make sure we're providing excellent services that provide great homes and stronger communities.

As always we're committed to putting you and your family first, below are some of our top priorities for **2022/2023**:



**Provide new opportunities to retain and attract the right people** who share our values and drive to put our customers' first and provide the services you need. This includes expanding our recruitment offer to give individuals opportunities to develop their skills and expertise to grow into their chosen role



**We are excited to support Cheltenham Borough Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030.** We're looking to improve the energy efficiency of 59 homes through funding we've secured. This will help reduce fuel costs for those living in the properties and help us identify the options we can take in the future to reduce carbon impact over the coming years



**Great homes is what we're about,** we continue our close partnership working with Cheltenham Borough Council as part of our £180m investment in quality homes and thriving communities. We will play our part in progressing new and existing schemes, continuing our acquisition, regeneration programme, and play our part in the Golden Valley Development



**We will work with partners** and provide new initiatives to make it easier for you to find work after you've completed training - we will also expand our employment and training opportunities to help you achieve your chosen career



**Continue our work to proactively prevent homelessness before it occurs** working closely with our partners to provide solutions and the right support to tackle domestic abuse. Making sure people feel safe and secure in their homes

# Our finances:

Every year your rent is paid into a pot of money called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The income generated in this account enables us to:

■ **Deliver enhanced services**

■ **Maintain and improve your home**

■ **Provide more affordable homes**

During **2021/22** the HRA spent a total of **£20.3m** and every **£1** of income received was distributed across the service areas in the following way:



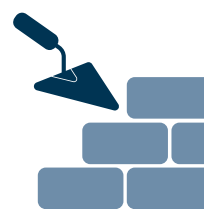
**Homes**

Improving homes



**22p  
Homes**

Maintaining and repairing homes



**12p  
Homes**

Providing new homes



**17p**

Maintaining neighbourhoods, involving residents and delivering services



**15p**

Business support services



**£20.3m**

spent on the services customers need



**10p**

Interest on amounts borrowed

**LOVE YOUR APPLIANCE?  
MAKE IT OFFICIAL!**

**REGISTER YOUR  
APPLIANCE FOR A  
SAFER HOME!**

**REGISTER  
MACHINES  
BOUGHT IN  
THE LAST 12  
YEARS**

**ENSURE  
MANUFACTURERS  
CAN CONTACT  
YOU FOR SAFETY  
REPAIRS**

**UPDATE  
YOUR DETAILS  
IF YOU OR YOUR  
APPLIANCE  
MOVE**

**GO TO [REGISTERMYAPPLIANCE.ORG.UK](https://registermyappliance.org.uk)**



**Register** ✓  
**my appliance**

**AMDEA**

The Association of Manufacturers  
of Domestic Appliances

The Register my appliance website is provided by The Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliance (AMDEA) and is backed by the Home Office and NFCC national fire safety campaign.