

Havebury
Housing Partnership



Winter 2023

Havebury News

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Operating times over the festive period



The festive period is fast approaching. Our opening hours over this time are:

- Friday 22 December - CLOSED
- Monday 25 December - Christmas Day - CLOSED
- Tuesday 26 December - Boxing Day - CLOSED
- Wednesday 27 December - Usual opening hours 8.30 am - 5 pm
- Thursday 28 December - Usual opening hours 8.30 am - 5 pm
- Friday 29 December - CLOSED
- Monday 1 January 2024 - New Years Day - CLOSED
- Tuesday 2 January 2024 - Usual opening hours 8.30 am - 5 pm

If you have an emergency during this time, please call 0300 3300 900, which will transfer you to our out-of-hours service.

You can continue to use myHavebury to report repairs, pay your rent and check your account online.

Thank you to Marc, who is a resident at Tayfen House, for providing the image for our front cover.

Marc says; "I started origami because it helps my mental health and thought process. Four years ago, I had an accident at work that stopped me doing the work that I loved so I had to find something to fill the empty hole that it had left. I remembered one of my family members had bought me an origami book for Christmas a good few years ago and I enjoyed doing it, so I restarted again about eight months ago and I've become pretty good at it. I hope you like it".



Andrew Smith

Chief Executive

Hello and welcome to our winter edition of Havebury News.

I hope, as always, you remain safe and well.

We have a bumper packed issue for you, with articles on fire safety, cost of living advice and work we're doing on supporting victims of domestic abuse.

As winter approaches, the drop in temperature can lead to condensation and potentially mould. In this issue, you'll find guidance and advice on how to manage and treat this, and how to report any concerns to us.

We are currently looking for residents to join our new academy. The Havebury Academy for Residents aims to help you get ready and prepared to apply for positions on our Board and Resident Experience Committee, as they become available. You are not guaranteed a position at the end of this programme, but we'll work with you to ensure you are as ready as you can be.

You've helped us improve our services by providing feedback on the quality of our grounds maintenance. We have now agreed to end our contract with idverde and are creating our own team to deliver grounds maintenance services across all your communities.

You can read more about this on page 13. We'll keep you posted but hope we can deliver a service that also provides real value for money.

We hope you enjoy this issue and remember to contact us with any comments and suggestions about the stories we run or future articles you would like to see.

ANDREW SMITH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Win a £50 Amazon voucher!

Would you like to win a £50 Amazon voucher just in time for Christmas?

All you need to do is answer this question: **What date does winter officially start in the UK?**

- a) 22 December
- b) 1 December
- c) 28 November



Please send your answers to communications@havebury.com or scan the QR code to complete the form online (don't forget to leave us your details, so we can contact you if you are our winner).

For an extra entry into the prize draw, you can also leave your feedback for this edition of Havebury News.

Cost of living support

We know that things are still difficult around living costs. Here are some ways we can help.

The most important thing is to get in touch with us if you know paying your rent will be a problem.

- **Our Welfare and Benefits team** can help you review your income and expenditure and offer advice on ways to maximise your money.
- You'll also find **our income and expenditure form** on our website, which you can use to record your incoming and outgoing spends. Visit www.havebury.com and type 'support' into the search bar to access it.
- **Our support fund** is open to you, if you rent your home or you're a shared owner and are struggling with your finances. It provides temporary relief from genuine hardship and is not intended as a means of long-term support. There are specific criteria that need to be met.

So far this year, our support fund has helped **933 residents, equating to £152,451.00** This money has helped with:

- purchasing appliances and furniture
- fuel and energy costs
- food vouchers
- tenancy sustainment

The administration and issuing of the above funds will be at our discretion and on a case-by-case basis.

To find out more about how our support fund has helped our residents scan the QR code.



Help from other organisations

We've pulled together some useful information from other organisations, including the UK Government's [Help for Households](#) campaign. You can find all of this by searching 'support' on our website.

Help for Households

For advice about your benefits, call 0300 3300 900, entering extension number 7305 when prompted. Alternatively, you can email myadvice@havebury.com



Check you're getting what you are entitled to

This year, the government increased benefit rates by 10.1%, in line with inflation. This means you could be entitled to benefits that you haven't been able to claim previously. In particular, universal credit, which is aimed at working-age people.

Here is an example of how someone might qualify:

Sarah, 27 and John, 32, live in one of our two-bedroom homes with their two children, and they pay £112 per week in rent.

Sarah and John's combined income is £3,000 (a month) after tax and national insurance. They also receive child benefit for their two children.

Based on their combined income, Sarah and John could be missing out on £207 of universal credit.

They could also be entitled to the cost of living payment of £299 in spring 2024, if their entitlement remains the same.

You can use a benefits calculator to see what you might be entitled to. They are easy to use, and you can get an answer in minutes. **Just visit www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators**

Our team can give you advice on when's the best time to claim universal credit. If you'd like to discuss your options, contact our **Welfare and Benefits team on 0300 3300 900 extension 7305 or email myadvice@havebury.com**

Fire safety in and around your home

We all need to play our part in keeping you safe in your home. We'll carry out safety checks, and you can also contact us if you have concerns about something.

But there are also things you should do, such as checking your smoke alarms, keeping any communal areas clear from clutter, and calling us if you're worried about something in or around your home.

Top tips for reducing fire risk in your home

- Take pans off the heat or turn them down if you need to leave the kitchen while cooking.
- Keep matches and saucepan handles out of the reach of children.
- Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order to prevent them from triggering a fire.
- Use one plug per socket. If you are using an extension cable, don't overload it. You can find out more about this and use the 'Socket Overload calculator' by visiting www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk
- Stub cigarettes out properly and dispose of them carefully.
- Put candles in a holder and keep them away from things that may burn – never leave them burning when you're not in the room.
- If there is a fire, know your escape route.

You can find further information on fire safety on our website, just type 'fire safety' into the search bar.

Safer home visit

You could be eligible for a safer home visit from your local council to find out more visit www.suffolk.gov.uk and search 'safer home visit'.



E-bikes and e-scooters



E-bikes and e-scooters have recently become a popular form of transport for many. Although there are many environmental benefits, it's important that they are used, charged and stored safely.

We've put together some safety advice for you:

- Batteries can be a fire risk if they're overcharged, short-circuited or damaged. It's important you check them regularly for damage and only charge them for the recommended time stated in the manufacturer's guide.
- Never leave your e-bike or e-scooter on charge unattended, and don't put them on charge while you are asleep.
- Unplug the charger once it has finished charging.
- Never block fire escape routes with an e-bike or e-scooter.
- Never tamper with the battery, and always follow the manufacturer's guide.
- Ensure the battery and charger meet UK safety standards, and always use the correct charger.
- Never cover the charger - this could lead to it overheating or setting on fire.
- Be wary of DIY kits bought online to convert a standard bike into an e-bike.

Scan this QR code to find out more.

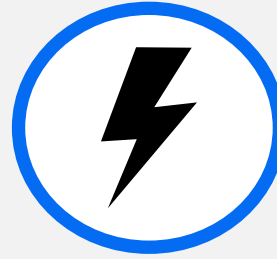


Appliances in your home

If you are looking to purchase a new cooker, we have some guidance for you to follow to make sure that there are no problems on installation day.



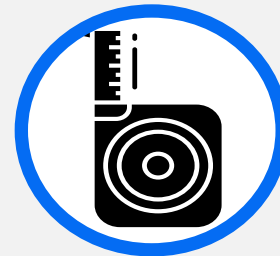
The hot zone - the space around your hob is called the 'hot zone', and you need to make sure it has no switches or a cooker hood above it. There also needs to be a gap of at least 65cm between your hob and the cooker hood or ceiling above. If it isn't clear of hazards, your new cooker may not be able to be installed.



Make sure your current electrical connection (which is either a plug socket or a red switch) matches what your new cooker needs. If your new cooker is over 3kw, then you'll need a 16Amp or 32Amp fuse - a red switch. If your new cooker is below 3kw, then you'll only need a standard 12Amp fuse - a regular plug socket.



If you are switching from a gas cooker to a new electric cooker, you will need a qualified Gas Safe engineer to fit this.



Before you buy a new appliance, it's worth checking the dimensions, just to make sure you've got enough space in your kitchen.

Permission and recharges

Our **property alterations and improvements policy** guides you through how to apply for permission to carry out your own repairs, alterations and improvements to your home. This includes painting your kitchen cupboard doors and drawers, or using vinyl wraps on your worktops.

Please note, if you decide to move out of your home, you will be recharged for replacing any doors, drawers or worktops that have been modified. You can find out more about these recharges on our website by searching '**ending your tenancy**' in the search box.

You can find our permission form on our website by searching 'permission' in the search box.

Complaints and compliments

Your feedback is important to us – through this we learn what works well and not so well – and what we need to fix.

We know that sometimes things can go wrong, and if you are unhappy with the service you received from us, we want you to let us know, so we can put things right.

It's also useful to know when you are happy with something we have done, or a service we have provided.

How can I make a complaint?

You can make a complaint in several ways.

- **Via our online form.**
www.havebury.com/complaints-and-compliments
- **Email us** at feedback@havebury.com
- Chat with a member of the team via our **social media channels.**
- **Report your issue to any of our team**, who will pass it on to the Customer Experience team. We will call you back to confirm all the details with you.
- **Write to us by post:**
Complaints and Compliments,
Havebury House,
Western Way, Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk
IP33 3SP

What is a complaint?

Our definition is the same as the [Housing Ombudsman Service's](#) definition.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by us, our team, contractors, or other representatives.

Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)

If you still feel dissatisfied at the end of our stage 2 process, you can ask the HOS to review your case.

You can also contact their support advisors at any point during the life of a complaint.

Contact details for the HOS are:

- **Housing Ombudsman website**
www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- **Telephone:** 0300 111 3000
- **Address:** Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

What happens when you make a complaint?

We receive your complaint **1**



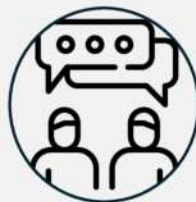
Our response **2**



Right to escalate to stage 2 **3**



Feedback **4**



Final outcome **5**



• We will review the details of your complaint.
• The Customer Experience team will contact you for details and be your point of contact for the complaint.

• We have 10 working days to fully investigate and send you a written response by email or letter. If required, we may need to agree an extension with you.

• If you're not happy with the stage 1 response, you can escalate this to stage 2.
• Your complaint will be reviewed by our Complaints Review Panel, which is up to three residents and a member of the Leadership team.

• The Customer Experience team will contact you to confirm what you would like the panel to consider.
• You'll receive a response within 20 working days. If required, we may need to agree an extension with you.

• If you're not happy with the stage 2 response, you can ask the Housing Ombudsman Service to review your case.

Complaints by service area April to September 2023

Service area	Stage 1	Complaints escalated to stage 2	Complaints escalated to Stage 3 (HOS)	Total number of complaints
Development This includes finding and managing new sites and defect enquiries.	6	1		7
Home ownership This includes right to buy/acquire, shared ownership and leaseholders.	1	1		2
Income This includes rent enquiries, payments and arrears.	1			1
Neighbourhood and Estates This includes ASB, estate management, mutual exchanges, permissions, tenancy changes and tenancy monitoring.	8	1		9
Allocations This includes ending tenancy agreements for homes and garages, allocating homes and garages and liaising with applicants who bid on empty homes.	5	1		6
Repairs This includes repairs reporting and logging as well as dealing with old and new repairs.	40	12	1	53
Service charges This includes rent and service charge setting and queries.	2			2
Strategic property This includes safety, surveys and condition of homes, upgrading programmes and void works.	7	2		9
Tayfen This includes any hostel enquiries.	1			1
Supported This includes supporting residents to live in their homes, assisting with bidding for homes, and suitability checks for independent living.	1	1		2
Servicing This includes gas servicing, electrical inspections, the servicing of lifting equipment and fire alarms.	37	1		38
Multi-team complaints This includes complex cases that involve multiple teams across the business.	8	2		10
TOTAL	117	22	1	140

Lessons learned

We review our complaints regularly to see what we can do to make sure the issues aren't repeated in the future. Some of the changes we have made this year include:

- Working with our contractors to ensure their communication improves, particularly in making and changing appointments.
- Working with our contractors to make sure they treat your home as they would their own. Ensuring they use shoe coverings and tidy up any mess they make when carrying out works.
- If there is a reason our technicians cannot complete repairs whilst in your home, a card will be left detailing what outstanding work is needed and when this will happen.
- We've done more to improve the repairs service we deliver, which you can read on page 28.

Compliments

Here are some recent examples of compliments we have received.

"Once again, thank you all so much for your support and help. I'm so blessed to have such wonderful caring people like yourselves who show such commitment to help me through this awful situation."

"We want to thank you and your team for doing your best and not giving up on us. Thank you for not putting my application aside and working with us to make sure we got this property. We will forever be grateful to you and keep you in our prayers."

"I want to praise the plasterers I had in today. They were polite, went above and beyond, and did a great job."

"All the work men were lovely and went above and beyond to help me. The work has made a big difference to my well-being."

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are questions set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). There are twelve 'tenant perception' (TP) questions we will ask you, and ten we will answer. These include questions such as the number of health and safety checks we undertook and number of complaints and antisocial behaviour cases we handled, and we'll return these to the RSH at the end of the financial year. It's a requirement for us to split out those residents who rent their homes, and shared owners.

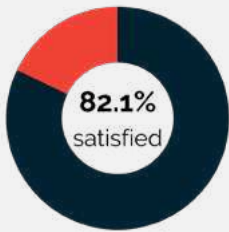
You can find out about the questions we ask by typing 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' into the search on our website.

We publish performance information every month on our website, which shows which areas are performing well and which we need to improve. We will also say what we're doing to improve things, where necessary.

Here are our results from April - September 2023

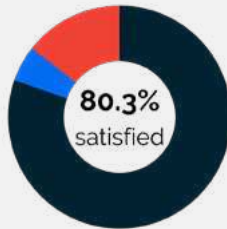
Rented homes

OVERALL SATISFACTION



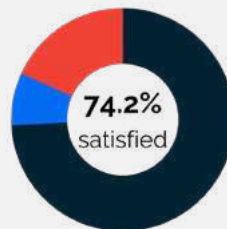
Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with our service?

REPAIRS SERVICE



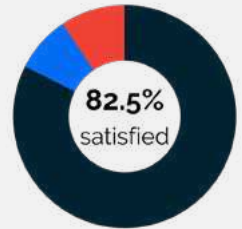
How satisfied are you with our overall repairs service?

REPAIRS COMPLETION TIME



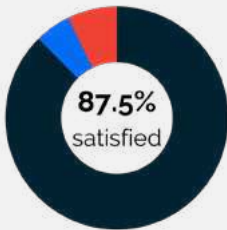
How satisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair?

BUILDING MAINTENANCE



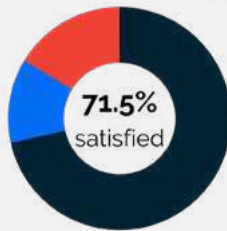
How satisfied are you that we provide a home that is well-maintained?

SAFETY



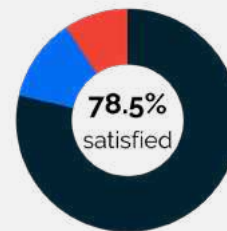
How satisfied are you that we provide a home that is safe?

LISTENS TO ME



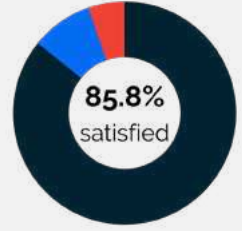
How satisfied are you that we listen to your views and act upon them?

KEEPS ME INFORMED



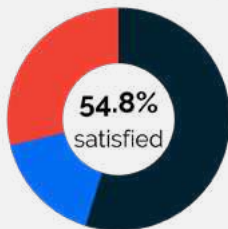
How satisfied are you that we keep you informed about things that matter to you?

TREATS ME FAIRLY



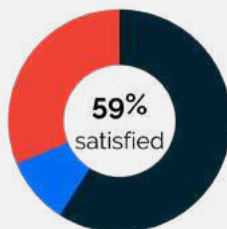
How satisfied are you that we treat you fairly and with respect?

COMPLAINTS HANDLING



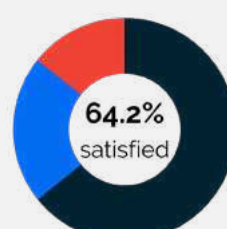
How satisfied are you about the way we handle complaints?

COMMUNAL AREAS



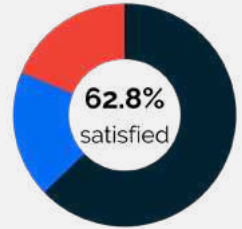
How satisfied are you that we keep your communal areas clean and well-maintained?

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTRIBUTION



How satisfied are you with our contribution to your neighbourhood?

ASB



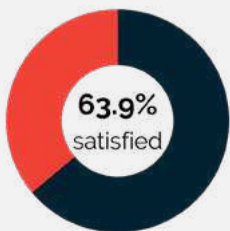
How satisfied are you with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

Tenant Satisfaction Measures continued



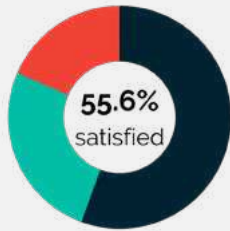
Shared owners

OVERALL SATISFACTION



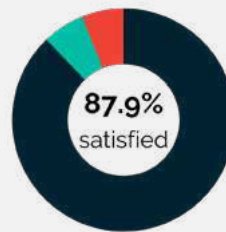
Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with our service?

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

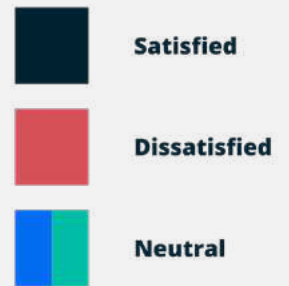


How satisfied are you that we provide a home that is well-maintained?

SAFETY



How satisfied are you that we provide a home that is safe?

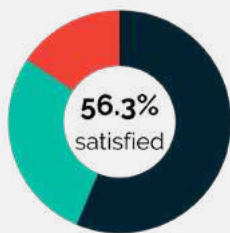


LISTENS TO ME



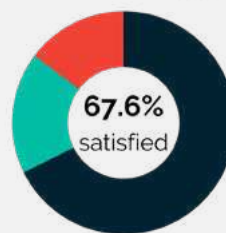
How satisfied are you that we listen to your views and act upon them?

KEEPS ME INFORMED



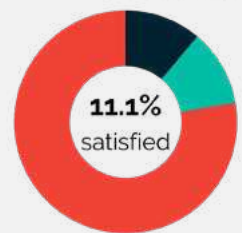
How satisfied are you that we keep you informed about things that matter to you?

TREATS ME FAIRLY



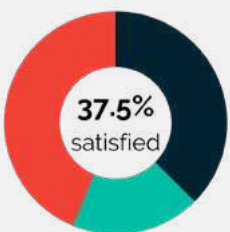
How satisfied are you that we treat you fairly and with respect?

COMPLAINTS HANDLING



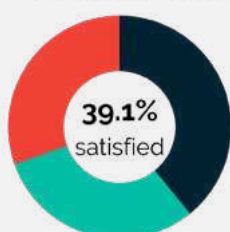
How satisfied are you about the way we handle complaints?

COMMUNAL AREAS



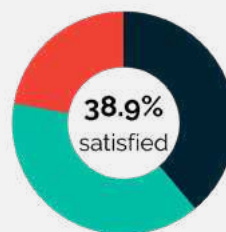
How satisfied are you that we keep your communal areas clean and well-maintained?

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTRIBUTION



How satisfied are you with our contribution to your neighbourhood?

ASB



How satisfied are you with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

So far, we have surveyed **346 residents** in rented homes and **36 shared owners**.

Our performance



See how we have performed April - September 2023.

	April - September performance	April - September target	Change on previous period	Commentary
New homes completed	93	62	↑	Over the last six months, 93 new homes were completed: 79 for rent and 14 for shared ownership.
Emergency repairs completed by our technicians within 24 hours	98.7%	95%	↔	Through implementing improvements and better system management of emergency repairs, performance now consistently meets target.
Routine repairs completed by our technicians within 28 days	66.5%	88%	↑	This is an improving picture, and over the last five months, we have continued to complete more repairs than we receive. This is reducing the number of works in progress, as well as repairs out of target. This key performance indicator still shows poor performance because we're completing more older jobs, but this will continue to improve month on month as we continue to complete these. All overdue repairs have an appointment booked, or they receive regular updates where this is not possible.
Customer satisfaction with last repair	91%	87%	↑	Our performance so far this year has improved, and is based on 391 surveys completed.
Rent loss to properties being empty	0.87%	0.88%	↑	We have seen a significant decrease in rent loss due to homes being empty this year, and retain our wish to be in the top 25% of housing associations by March 2024.
% of properties with a valid gas safety certificate	100%	100%	↑	There were no gas services overdue at the end of September.
% of fire risk assessments up to date	100%	100%	↑	There were no fire risk assessments overdue at the end of September.
ASB complainants satisfied with the handling of their ASB case	87%	87%	↑	Satisfaction with ASB handling is based on 38 surveys completed between April and September. We continue to look at any cases of dissatisfaction to see where improvements could be made.
Complaints responded to in timescale	100%	100%	↔	77 new complaints were raised between April and September.
Current resident rent arrears	2.30%	2.42	↑	Our Income team continue to provide support to our residents in maximising rent collection. This includes benefits advice, as well as working with other agencies. We are continuing our proactive work over the coming months in this area - as we know our residents finances continue to be squeezed as we approach the winter months. If this is a concern to you, please get in touch with us on 0300 3300 900 or myaccount@havebury.com .

Changes to how we deliver grounds maintenance



From February 2024, we'll be making changes to the way we deliver grounds maintenance services.

From your feedback, as well as our estate inspections and visits, we knew this wasn't always being delivered in the way we would like.

We've spent some time reviewing our options for this service and in summer 2023, we made the decision to deliver this service ourselves.

This was for a few reasons. It's a service you will always require, and us delivering it means we have better control over the quality and service provided. In our repairs policy consultation last year, you also told us that you prefer our team to carry out repair works, rather than our contractors.

Mark Leeds joined us in September 2023 as our new grounds maintenance operations manager. He will work with our current contractor, idverde, to ensure bringing this service in-house runs smoothly, ready for when we start to deliver this ourselves from February 2024.

Mark brings many years of experience in grounds maintenance. He began as a grounds maintenance operative and progressed to senior management, including working as a horticultural tutor, educating others in the sector.

Mark explains: *"We want to improve the communication with our residents around their grounds maintenance service. I started my career as a grounds maintenance operative, so I understand the importance of quality customer service".*

"We aim to build an engaging and proactive team available to you to discuss any concerns or issues you have around your grounds maintenance service. We ask that you bear with us during this transition, and if you have any questions, please get in touch with our Neighbourhood and Estates team".

We will have a number of new vacancies we'll be recruiting for. If you are interested in a grounds maintenance role, keep your eye on our website.

From February, we will have dedicated teams in each of our areas, so you will get to know the operatives working within your community and you'll be able to speak to them directly about any issues or concerns you have.

In the spring 2024 edition of Havebury News, we'll share with you an update on how the new service is going, as well as what you can expect from our team and confirmation of their planned rounds.

We will also provide updates on our website, including the exact date of when we will start delivering this.

If you want to report any grounds maintenance concerns, you can use the **myHavebury app**, you can call **0300 3300 900** and enter extension number **7333** when prompted, or email myarea@havebury.com

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA)

In the spring 2023 edition of Havebury News, we set out how we were working to become DAHA accredited. This is the only UK benchmark for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse.

It has taken some time to collate all the work we do to support victims and DAHA will now review this. We'll hopefully have news from them towards the end of this year.

Amy St Ledger, our assistant director of customer and housing services, says:



"We remain committed to achieving our DAHA accreditation. But this is just a part of our commitment to supporting victims and survivors of domestic abuse".

She adds:

"Our teams have more knowledge and experience, and we have several volunteers across our teams who want to offer their support and personal experience to support our residents and staff".

We will also be introducing our domestic abuse champions. These champions are trained to develop knowledge on asking, responding, and supporting people affected by domestic abuse, and to use their knowledge to respond effectively and appropriately.

Louise Whatley, neighbourhood and estates manager and project lead on our DAHA accreditation explains:



"The introduction of domestic abuse champions is something I felt very strongly about being a part of".

"To give colleagues the confidence to engage with one another and our residents on this subject, ensuring they receive advice & guidance to understand the support available to them".

Checking if someone has an abusive past

If you are concerned that a new, former or existing partner has an abusive past, you can ask the police to check under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (also known as 'Clare's Law'). This is your 'right to ask'. If records show that you may be at risk of domestic abuse, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so.

If you are concerned about a friend or family member, you can apply for a disclosure on behalf of someone you know, you can make a request to the police for information about a person's previous violent offending in person at the police station or elsewhere, by telephone, by email, online or as part of a police investigation. Support agencies and services can also help you ask the police about this.

If you are a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse and you aren't sure where you can go for help, we have a range of resources on our website just search 'support' in the search box. Alternatively, you can call 01284 722279 to be put through to our Supported team.

Meet our domestic abuse champions



Tracey Roach, senior people business partner – “I wanted to gain a better understanding and provide another perspective with regard to our own team members, and to be an internal champion to support and appreciate the challenges around this difficult subject”.



Karen, hoarding and wellbeing support advisor - “The subject of domestic abuse is always going to be a sensitive discussion point and I wanted to be part of the Domestic Abuse Champion’s network. I want to provide appropriate support to those that struggle to have their voices heard and to be a supportive point of contact for colleagues, whether this is due to concerns for a resident or they themselves are experiencing some form of domestic abuse”.



Katie Ives, logistics team leader – “Many victims of abuse are invisible to the authorities. Not all abuse is obvious, to the victim or others. I know first-hand what it’s like to be missed by the system. I want to help raise awareness both with victims and the community”.



Lauren Eden, external communications advisor – “I wanted to become a domestic abuse champion as it is something that is close to my heart. I want to be able to give victims a voice, where perhaps they feel they have lost theirs, to remind them they are not alone and encourage them to get the help and support they need”.

Estate inspections

We want you to enjoy living in a community that is safe, secure, and well-maintained. These are some of the reasons we carry out estate inspections in our neighbourhoods.

Estate inspections are carried out by an estate ranger, a neighbourhood housing officer, and other members of our team, and we'd also like you to be a part of these. During these inspections, we will work with you to identify any issues your community may be having, for example, fly-tips, anti-social behaviour or grounds maintenance issues. We will then agree on an action plan and timeframe to resolve these.

Your input and feedback about where you live is really important, so please get involved if you can.

Why complete an estate inspection?

When we are completing estate inspections, we look out for the following:

- outstanding repairs to communal areas
- poorly maintained gardens and boundaries
- vehicle nuisance, including abandoned vehicles on communal land and obstructions
- poor performance of grounds maintenance contractors
- vandalism and graffiti
- work required to trees on communal land
- the condition of garage areas, allotments and some play areas
- the existence of pest infestations on communal land
- the cleanliness and condition of bin stores and refuse collection points

Where do we complete estate inspections?

We look at our data, including anti-social behaviour cases, fly tips and grounds maintenance complaints, to identify which estates we will include in our programme of inspections. If you'd like us to consider your community, please get in touch with us via:

Email – myarea@havebury.com

Call – 0300 3300 900 entering extension number 7333 when prompted.

When are the estate inspections?

We make sure you're given the date and time well in advance so you can take part in your local inspection. We publish these on our website. If you live in the area, we'll contact you directly, via email and SMS text in the weeks leading up to the inspection.



Estate inspections

If you can't attend these, you can still let us know if there's something you want us to focus on by sending an email to myarea@havebury.com or calling the Neighbourhood and Estates team on 0300 3300 900 and enter extension number 7333 when prompted.

Our 2024 programme

Below is a full timetable for our estate inspections in 2024 and each inspection will be 10 am - 1 pm, except for the Howard Estate inspection on 25 April. This will be between 2 pm and 4 pm.

Date	Location and meeting point
Wednesday 10 January 2024	Bury St Edmunds town (North) - Ipswich Court, IP33 1ST
Tuesday 23 January 2024	Bury St Edmunds town (South) - Yeomanry Yard, Kings Road, IP33 3DW
Thursday 8 February 2024	Ely - opposite 100-110 Morley Drive, CB6 3FQ
Wednesday 21 February 2024	Cambridge Way, Haverhill - opposite number 57, CB9 9HN
Tuesday 5 March 2024	Hepworth - 9-13 The Street, IP22 2PS
Thursday 21 March 2024	Chalkstone Estate, Haverhill - Strasbourg Square, CB9 0HR
Tuesday 16 April 2024	Birds Estate, Haverhill - Parking areas adjacent to 33-38 Kingfisher Close, CB9 0JW
Thursday 25 April 2024	Howard Estate, Bury St Edmunds - opposite Parkington Walk, IP32 6QX
Thursday 2 May 2024	Ixworth - opposite 5 Peddars Close, IP31 2HA
Wednesday 15 May 2024	Barrow - Autumn Close, IP29 5DH
Tuesday 28 May 2024	Mildenhall Estate, Bury St Edmunds - opposite Lake Avenue Shops, IP32 6HX
Thursday 13 June 2024	Clare - opposite 5 Westfields, CO10 8NU
Wednesday 26 June 2024	Nowton Estate, Bury St Edmunds - near community centre car park, IP33 2PJ
Tuesday 9 July 2024	Clements Estate, Haverhill - Harewood Terrace, Leiston Rd, CB9 8JJ
Thursday 25 July 2024	Stanton - opposite 9-11 Windmill Green, IP31 2AL
Wednesday 7 August 2024	Great Cornard - adjacent to 17-49 Grace Farrant Road, CO10 0FR
Tuesday 20 August 2024	Stowmarket - Dukes Meadow View, IP14 1BG
Thursday 5 September 2024	Old Haverhill - on the corner of Ash Grove, CB9 9HT
Wednesday 18 September 2024	Thetford - Heath Court, IP24 3AX
Tuesday 1 October 2024	Parkway, Haverhill - opposite the church, Blair Parade, CB9 9BW
Thursday 17 October 2024	Vinefields, Bury St Edmunds - opposite 25-31 Vinefields, IP33 1YE
Wednesday 30 October 2024	Priors Estate, Bury St Edmunds - Ashwell Road, IP33 3LN
Tuesday 12 November 2024	Warboys - 18-23 Rea Court, PE28 2WG
Thursday 28 November 2024	Westley Estate, Bury St Edmunds - Ridley Road, IP33 3HW

Ways to get involved

Our approach to engagement is quite simple:

We will listen to your voice however you share it with us. We will use your comments to make our services better. We will tell you where we've done this using plain and simple language in a timely way.

Where we haven't used your feedback, we'll explain why.

There are plenty of ways you can get involved, and you can find out more about these on our website, by typing 'engagement' into the search bar.

We understand that not everyone wants to engage with us regularly, but we hope we've made it more accessible and easier to identify the best way for when you do.

So far this year, we have organised four community days on the Clements Estate, Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds town, Parkway/Old Haverhill and Thetford (you can read more about these community days on page 19).

We have also held 22 estate inspections, and the feedback you have provided us on these days has helped us understand what you like about your community and where we can improve. For example, on our estate inspections you told us that grounds maintenance issues were a concern. You can find out more about our estate inspections on pages 16 - 17 and the plan for these to continue next year.

Our website

This year, we're also looking at improving our website.

Earlier this year, we held focus groups with our residents and had informal chats at our community days and estate inspections, to see how and why you use our website and what you would like to see on this. We will be able to give feedback on these changes in spring 2024. You may also see some changes live on our website.



The Place and myHavebury

In early 2024, we will be merging our online engagement platform, The Place, with myHavebury, which is our resident portal that allows you to manage your tenancy at the click of a button. Once you're signed up, you can:

- Report a repair and make or move an appointment with us.
- Check your account balance(s) and download statement(s).
- Make payment on your accounts.
- Set up, change or cancel your direct debits with us.
- Make arrangements to pay off any arrears, or apply for a refund if you're in credit with us.
- Give notice on your home or garage tenancy with us.
- Report fly-tips, grass-cutting issues, abandoned vehicles or any other issues where you live.
- Update your phone number or email address.

The Place, which you can access via our website, is your digital platform to get involved with us by completing surveys, polls and competitions. We also use the page to report how we have listened to your feedback, implemented policy changes, changed our services, and more.

By bringing together The Place and myHavebury, we are giving you the opportunity to engage with us in a different way. This will be easier, and effectively be a one stop shop for contacting us.

To sign up to The Place scan the QR code or visit

www.havebury.com/the-place





Community Days 2023

This year, we've hosted four community days. These were a great opportunity for you to discuss where we could improve and what we were doing well. It was great some of our local community partners could join us.

Helen Cullop from The Local Conversation Haverhill South said, "We received positive feedback from those who attended, and it would be great to have a regular time for Havebury to be in Haverhill to talk about any issues or concerns".

Following on from this feedback we are planning regular drop-in sessions in Haverhill and other communities where we have homes, so you can engage with us more regularly.

We also worked with idverde to facilitate the collection of fly-tips to keep your area clean and tidy and correctly dispose of bulkier items.

Members of our teams from across the business took part in litter picking across various locations. We also chatted with residents about concerns they may have. Where we couldn't answer something immediately, we made sure we got back to them afterwards.

One resident from Thetford commented, "I have been living in my home for several years, and I have never had any problems. I am delighted with how quickly things are dealt with".

Jordan Noble, one of our influence and engagement advisors, said, "Our community days gave us a fantastic opportunity to engage with our residents on a 1-1 level and deal with their feedback directly. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who attended. It's been beneficial to hear ideas from our residents on ways we can engage with them in the future".

Following further feedback from our residents, next year, we are planning on bringing back our clean-up days.

If you visited any of our community days this year and have any feedback, or if you have any ideas for things you would like us to consider next year, please get in touch with the Customer Experience team at engagement@havebury.com

Thank you to all our community partners who joined us on our community days, including:

- West Suffolk Council (Clements Estate, Old Haverhill/Parkway)
- Citizen's Advice (Clements Estate, Thetford)
- Idverde (Clements Estate, Bury Town Centre, Old Haverhill/Parkway)
- The Allotment Group (Clements Estate)
- Haverhill South People's Forum (Clements Estate)
- The Rural Coffee Caravan (Bury Town Centre)
- Haverhill Town Councillors (Old Haverhill/Parkway)
- Norfolk Constabulary (Thetford)
- Snap Fitness (Thetford)
- Early Childhood and Family Service (ECFS) (Thetford)
- Breckland/Town Councillors (Thetford)

It is important to us to have residents at the heart of where the decisions are made.



We have some fantastic resident board and committee members, and we want to make sure all resident voices are heard. Members can only sit on a board or committee for a maximum of six years, so we need to ensure we have clear plans for new residents to join us.

We have created an academy to help residents get ready and prepared to apply for positions on our board and Resident Experience Committee. You are not guaranteed a position at the end of this programme, but we'll work with you to ensure you are as ready as you can be.

During your time in the academy, which could be up to a year, you will get to know Havebury, understand how we're run and undertake a housing qualification if you wish. We can tailor the training programme to you.

You will receive up to £1,000 a year (paid monthly) plus expenses for things like travel or registered childcare. You will need to allow half a day per month, although this may be more some months than others, particularly if you wish to do a qualification.

Our first academy member, Sarah Morgan, told us why she wanted to join:

"Social housing is so important and I'm personally aware of how quickly life can change and you find yourself in need of a home. It's important residents have their say and their voices are heard when decisions are made. I'm completely new to this, but am looking forward to learning about becoming a committee member so I can apply for a future role. I'm really excited to get started".

If you are over 18, rent one of our homes or are a shared owner and are interested, visit www.havebury.com/your-involvement/we-are-recruiting/ or scan the QR code below.

Please complete the online expression of interest and we'll get in touch with you.

We look forward to hearing from you.



As you're probably aware, in early October 2023, we sent out our resident survey to all households.

We want to ensure we have the most up-to-date information about you and your families. Not only will the information you give us help us tailor our communications, it also helps us understand your individual needs and requirements and how we can ensure the services we provide meet these.

It also means we can provide you with as much advice and support about your circumstances and, if needed, signpost you to partner agencies that can help you.

Thank you to everyone who took part in completing the survey. As of 30 October, we had 1,394 entries, and we look forward to being able to update you with the final figure at the end of December.

Here are some comments from what you have already told us:

- "Sometimes letters can be unclear and confusing especially for those with different learning abilities".
- "I am disabled and I would appreciate more time to answer the door when you visit me".
- "I don't own a computer, it would be helpful for people like me to offer alternative options for communication".
- "Communication on the phone should be clearer and not as rushed".

We have extended the deadline for this survey, if you haven't already, please return the completed survey to us by 15 December 2023.

If you do, you could be entered into the prize draw to win:

- 1 x £300 supermarket voucher**
- 2 x £100 supermarket vouchers**
- 10 x £50 supermarket vouchers**

Make sure you follow us on social media and keep an eye on the website as we go into the new year, for updates on WHAT we will do with the information you provide.

Community Investment Grants

Do you have an idea for a community project within your local area but need some investment to get this started?

We're looking to support projects that have a direct impact to your local area and that would benefit the community.

For example, perhaps you want to start a community garden, or have another idea that you and your local community could benefit from.

We have a fund that you may be able to access, to get this started.

There is certain criteria you will need to meet:

- Your project must be for the benefit of the community on a not-for-profit basis.
- It must identify a specific need.
- It needs to be within five miles of one of our homes or estates.
- You will need to provide a detailed financial plan.

If this sounds like something that could benefit your community group, please get in touch with us at engagement@havebury.com to start your application.

When we receive a community investment grant (CIG) application, we post this on The Place and ask you to tell us whether you think we should support the local project or not.

To find out more, and to sign up to The Place scan the QR code.



Two projects that have been successful in their applications are Memories are Golden and the Chalkstone Community Centre, both in Haverhill. Their grant requests will significantly improve the lives of those who use their services.

Memories Are Golden

Memories Are Golden were awarded £5,000 to renovate new premises, which will allow them to help more people in the Haverhill area.

The hub specialises in offering day care services to those living with dementia and other conditions. It provides a safe space to socialise and build friendships, as well as providing meaningful activities, entertainment, and social events, to improve well-being.

Kelly Kennedy-Smith, hub manager explains;

"Our service also gives families a respite, they know their loved one is in a safe space. We also provide a carers forum on a Friday; this allows the families to develop a support network which is really important so that they don't feel alone."

This project had 40 votes of support and here is some of the feedback:



"This is a fantastic group. My stepdad has dementia, and this place has been an absolute god send. It allows my mum a much-needed rest".

"This is an asset for Haverhill and also fantastic for the users and support to their loved ones".

"Memories are Golden is a fun place to be with caring staff. It is a much-needed service for people with dementia and people who need company. It's one of a kind".

At the time of publication, Memories are Golden are still searching for a new premises. If you think you know somewhere that could be suitable, please send an email to enquiries@memoriesaregolden.co.uk

Community Investment Grants

Chalkstone Community Centre

The Chalkstone Community centre was awarded £2,130.90 to fit out their main hall with an Assistive Listening System (Hearing Loop).

The Chalkstone Community Centre is a major hub within the community and provides vital services to those who live in the area. By fitting the hearing loop, the venue will be a place where people who are audibly impaired can take part, belong, and hear the events clearly.



Jacqueline Lowry from the centre explains; **“Due to the nature of some of the events that take place in the hall, some of our visitors were finding it hard to hear what was going on.**

With this hearing loop it means everyone will be able to join in as they are able to hear. The user can tune out the other background noise and focus in.

We host a church service on Sunday morning, and now all the parishioners will be able to get involved”.

This project had 62 votes to support it and here is some of the feedback:

“These guys do some great stuff in the Haverhill community. They go out of their way to make sure their centre is accessible as well so this would be a great further addition.”

“Fitting a hearing loop system will improve the accessibility for the significant number of service users helping to provide an equitable experience for all.”

“I am deaf and have benefitted enormously from hearing loops in other buildings. It'd be fantastic if the centre was more accessible to others.”

Our grants have helped other community programmes this year including Bury Physiotherapy Health and Wellbeing Clinic in Bury St Edmunds who applied for £500 to install a defibrillator to the external wall of the clinic.

To find out more and apply scan the QR code or visit our website and search 'community investment grants' in the search box.



Meet our resident, Liz

Liz moved into her new home in Haverhill in August this year.

Liz lived on the Chalkstone Estate in Haverhill over 30 years ago, while she studied at university in Cambridge. She then moved away from the town but moved back due to a change in circumstances.

"I needed additional help due to my medical issues. This, combined with unfortunate circumstances with a home I owned, I decided to return to Haverhill".

She gets a lot of support from her son and his wife, which was another key reason for her moving back into the area.

Before moving into her current home, she lived in a house run by another social housing provider. Due to her mobility issues, she was finding her old home unfit for purpose.

Moving around the house and using both the front and back doorways was becoming increasingly difficult.

"It was becoming impossible for me to get in and out. There was a massive step to get out the back, and there was nowhere to put grab rails. It was a real issue for me and meant I was miserable living in that house".

"This home is definitely more accessible for me. There are some teething troubles with it being a new house, but the Repairs team at Havebury have been brilliant".

Speaking about the local community, she says:

"It's lovely. I have had many people say 'hello', and my next-door neighbour is nice and always offers help if needed".

Liz has a wonderful support network and is keen to be socially active.


"I like taking part in quizzes and going to concerts. We have been a couple of times to see The Drifters, so I do get out and about. I couldn't do it without my friends".

Liz joked that she never wanted to move again and said,

"I will definitely be happy here for the foreseeable future".

If you would like to share your story with us, please send an email to communications@havebury.com

**In 2022 - 2023, 529
needs homes were
72 residents completed
mutual exchanges.**



**general
let with
eting**

Meet our shared owner, Emma



In May 2023, Emma moved into her new shared ownership home in Hethersett, Norfolk.

After four years of renting in Norfolk, Emma was determined to provide some stability for her family, especially her 13-year-old twin boys. She discovered shared ownership, and it gave her the opportunity to own a home of her own.

Emma explains:

"I had heard about shared ownership, so I did a bit of research into whether it would be suitable for me".

Emma started saving up for her deposit:

"I knew what I needed to get, so it was just working hard and saving as much as I could until I reached that amount".

Once she had her deposit, she started looking at locations. She needed somewhere close enough to her work and her son's school.

"I had been looking for a shared ownership home for around 18 months in total. I was pipped to the post on quite a few – I felt like I was never going to get anywhere".

In August 2022, she viewed a two-bed home around the corner from her current home but had concerns that it may be too small for her family.

"I didn't think I could afford anything bigger".

As fate would have it, a three-bed house was coming to the market. Emma was advised it would be around a six-month wait, but after passing all the affordability checks, she was prepared to wait.

"Everything did kind of fall into place for me. Havebury were amazing in helping me find my dream home, something I never thought possible four years ago".

Emma's journey has inspired her to dream even bigger, with plans to buy more shares in her home.

"It's enabled me to start building towards the future, which I didn't think would be possible. I never thought I could own my own home and have security above mine and my children's heads".

Emma's advice to those considering shared ownership:

"Go for it! I can't see any negatives, and I'm so grateful I did it".



If you are interested in finding out more about shared ownership, please visit our website and search 'shared ownership' in the search box, or you can email

homeownership@havebury.com

In 2022 – 2023 we completed 87 homes for shared ownership in Haverhill, Badwell Ash and Bury St Edmunds.

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One Common Goal



In 2022 – 2023 we carried out 31,102 repairs. 20,572 of these were completed by our in-house team, which is 66% of all repairs completed.

You can find out more about this in our [Annual Report](#) on our website - just search 'Annual Report' in the search box.

In October we launched 'One Common Goal'. This is a set of commitments our technicians make when they enter your home to carry out repairs, ensuring, you, our resident, always come first.

- We will always be respectful and considerate when visiting your home.
- We will always call you before your scheduled appointment to let you know we are on our way. If there is an emergency which results in us being late for your appointment, we will always contact you and let you know.
- We will treat your home as we would do our own. Ensuring we use shoe coverings and tidy up any mess we make when carrying out your repairs.
- We will let you know the repairs we are carrying out before we do them and update you if any follow-up repairs are required.
- If we cannot complete all repairs whilst we are there, we will leave a card with you, detailing what outstanding work needs to be done, and confirmation of when this will happen.

- We will always aim to leave your home as we have found it. If any decorative touch-up works are required after we've carried out any work, we will supply you with decorating vouchers to pay for the cost of carrying these out. If you are unable to decorate yourself, please let us know and we can look to make alternative arrangements.
- If you have any further questions that we cannot answer, we will leave you a card detailing the relevant team to contact, along with the team's contact details.

We understand things can change and you may no longer be available for an appointment we've booked. In these instances, please get in touch with us as soon as possible, so we can rebook and use this slot to carry out a repair in somebody else's home.



A morning in the life of a technician



Darren Byham is a multi-skilled technician in our Responsive Repairs team. Let's take a look at his typical morning routine.

"My day starts at our office in Bury St Edmunds, where I get my van ready, ensuring I am equipped for the day ahead.

In this role, flexibility is key, as no two jobs are the same, so I must have tools and parts for different repair jobs.

My scheduler releases the jobs for the day to me first thing in the morning so I can quickly glance over where I am and what jobs need to be completed. I also take special notice of any specific requests, such as before midday or avoiding the school run times, to ensure I fit my day around these requirements.

My days vary; some days, I have a full day of inspections, where a resident has reported an issue, and I go and find out more about the job. If it's an issue I can fix there and then I will do it. This saves the resident the inconvenience of a follow-up appointment.

"What I love about my role is its unpredictability and the immense job satisfaction it brings. I am dedicated to assisting residents in their homes, including looking at any other repairs they may have to see if I can help".



Before each appointment, I notify the resident that I am on my way. If they don't answer, I will still head to their home.

When I get to a resident's home, I will look to understand the reported repair fully. I will then explain my planned solution and log the details on our system. In the case of an inspection, if I can perform the repair there and then, I often have what I need in my van, but when I don't, I will explain this to the residents and let them know the next steps.

After I have completed the repair, I will inform the resident what I have done and make sure they are happy, and I will update our system, which will close off the job. If I have used parts from the van, I will make a note to replenish the stock at the next opportunity.

I am then off to the next repair or inspection".



Damp, mould and condensation

Winter is prime time for condensation and mould to build up, as we tend to keep windows and doors closed to keep out the cold. In doing so, your home lacks proper ventilation, which can cause the build-up of humid air.

If you find yourself struggling with damp or mould and condensation, here is a reminder of our process, so that we can help you tackle these issues as soon as you notice them.

Our process

If you've noticed mould or damp in your home, contact our Repairs team on 0300 3300 900 and dial extension number 7800 when prompted.

Alternatively, you can report these via the myHavebury app – my.havebury.com

If this is the first time you've reported this, one of our technicians will visit your home to carry out a mould wash within ten working days. They'll also see if they can spot anything causing the problem and carry out any required repairs. Depending on the severity of the issue, we may instruct our cleaning contractor to come to your home to perform the mould wash. If this is the case, we will advise you when we visit you.

We'll then contact you after six weeks to see if this has helped or if we need to take further action.

If, after this time, the problem has not been resolved, a surveyor will visit you to survey your home to see what could be causing the issue. We will identify and arrange the work required and share this with you, including timescales for completion.

Once works have been completed, we'll check back with you again in six months to ensure the problem hasn't returned.

How to avoid condensation in your home

- Keep furniture away from walls. Even keeping a small space between your furniture and walls gives mould less of an opportunity to grow.
- Put lids on your cooking pans. This will reduce the amount of moisture in the air.
- Keep the bathroom and kitchen ventilated. If there is no extractor fan, open windows. However, keep the door shut to prevent the moisture from entering another room.
- Report leaks immediately. If mould suddenly starts growing in a part of a room it hasn't before, it'd be best to investigate and make sure you haven't got a slow leak somewhere.

Cost of living

We understand that you may be concerned about the rising cost of heating your home especially as we are into the colder months.

If you need support, please get in touch with our Welfare and Benefits team on 0300 3300 900 and enter extension number 7305 when prompted.

We may be able to provide you help through our support fund.

There is also further help available from Help for Households from the government (if you are eligible) including winter fuel payments, cold weather payments and the Warm Home Discount, scan the QR code to find out more or search 'cost of living' in the search box on our website.

Last winter:

- **Our technicians visited 434 homes to investigate damp and mould.**
- **Our surveyors visited 107 homes.**
- **Where the problem has not been resolved after our first visit, it took surveyors an average of 9.8 days to complete a stage 2 survey.**



Thistle home contents insurance

As part of our resident survey, so far, 56.3% of you have said you don't have home contents insurance and here are some of the reasons why.

- You said you couldn't afford to add it into your household budget.
- You said that you didn't know about home contents insurance.
- You said that you didn't think you needed this type of insurance.
- You said that you simply hadn't had the time to sort it out yet.

Did you know we are only responsible for insuring the building that you live in? It's your responsibility to insure your home contents and personal belongings.

We understand that money can be tight for many of us. But do you have a budget for protecting the contents of your home?

No matter how careful you are, there is always a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen, so home contents insurance can help provide peace of mind should the worst happen.

It's a good idea to consider what a home contents insurance policy covers you for and to build the cost of the insurance premium into your monthly budget outgoings.

You can use any comparison site to find home contents insurance, but ensure you have included everything; otherwise, you may be at a loss if something happens.

We work with Thistle Tenant Risks, who provide specialist policies for residents in our homes.

You can learn more about them on our website, by searching for 'home contents insurance' in the search box, or you can call Thistle directly on 0345 450 7288.



Havebury News feedback

We would love to know what you think of our winter edition of Havebury News.



As a result of your feedback from the spring 2023 edition, we've now included:

- Resident stories.
- Reminders about our damp and mould policy.
- Our technician's commitments to you.
- A competition.

To give your feedback on this edition, scan the QR code or visit www.havebury.com/the-place



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- a) 22 December
- b) 1 December
- c) 28 November

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