

gateway news

AUTUMN 2022

Bitesize

A SHORTER EDITION
FOR A QUICK READ



community
gateway

Hello & Welcome



welcome to our bitesize edition of Gateway News.

David and I would like to start by saying thank you to those tenants that attended our Annual General Meeting (AGM) – whether that be in person for the Q&A session at The Courtyards or tuning into the full AGM online.

You'll understand I'm sure that due to the sad passing of The Queen we changed our original plans, however, we were keen to still make our AGM as widely accessible as possible and allow our members and tenants to take part and play a role.

From the numbers that have tuned in and the feedback we've received I think we

can judge this year's AGM a success!

We're also using this mini edition of Gateway News to feedback to you on the headline results from the STAR Survey that many of you completed earlier this year. We're pleased that most of you are satisfied with the overall service we provide, and particularly pleased that the changes we've made to our repairs service and our involvement programme following your feedback in previous surveys has led to greater satisfaction in these key areas.

We'll reflect on the feedback you've provided us in this year's survey, and from the information we collected in speaking to many of you at

our Summer Roadshows, and make changes to our services that will hopefully mean you are even more satisfied in the future.

All the best.

Dave and Rob

EVOLVING OUR SERVICES



With the sad passing of Her Majesty the Queen on 8th September, we felt it only right that we rescheduled the original date of our Annual General Meeting (AGM) due to take place that day. The amended date for our AGM was Thursday 29th September and what a success it was!

More than 200 members and invited guests joined us online on the day, with many others watching over the following days.

The votes received for all resolutions were announced on the night and each was successfully passed. Tenants heard updates from the last 12 months and how we were performing against all strands of our Corporate Plan.

Ronnie Fleming, Gateway Central Member, provided an update on the Community Empowerment Strategy, showcasing all the fantastic work that we have been involved with in our communities during 2021/22.

Earlier in the week, residents from our Extra Care Scheme - The Courtyards, along with involved tenants, Board Members and Gateway Central Members, joined our Executive Leadership team for a question and answer session and watched the AGM with friends in the communal lounge. We received some great questions and you can find all of these and the corresponding answers overleaf.

We would like to thank everyone who attended our AGM and hope to see lots more of you next year. If you would like to see what happened on the night, please visit www.communitygateway.co.uk/agm.

AGM Winner

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback following the Annual General Meeting. As a thank you for taking part, we ran a prize draw to win a **£250 voucher**. Congratulations to our winner, Mary from the Filberts, we hope you enjoy spending your vouchers!

Annual General Meeting Questions and Answers

How do you make decisions on adaptations to our properties?

There is a difference between minor adaptations and major adaptations. Anyone can request minor adaptations, such as grab rails and toilet seats, by calling us. We will visit and assess the situation. For major adaptations, such as installing a ramp, driveway or level access showers, we need a specialist referral. You should still contact us and we will put you in touch with an Occupational Therapist. Once we have received their referral, we will visit to see if the property is suitable for the works required.

I've noticed that some new homes have electric car charging points. Can I get one fitted if my home doesn't have one?

We are installing electric car charging points in all our new homes; but not fitting these to existing properties. However, customers can contact any reputable company to install one. Don't forget to get this approved by us beforehand.

What is Community Gateway doing to help people with the cost of living crisis?

We are acutely aware of how challenging things are right now for everybody and have a range of activities and programmes in place to help. We know, as a landlord, that one of the biggest outgoings our tenants

have are their rents, so we are working to keep these affordable and do everything we can to ensure this is the case. In comparison with other housing associations, our standard rent is on average at least 8% lower and around 20% lower for our supported housing tenants.

Our Tenancy Support team make a fantastic difference to the income that our customers receive and maximise the amount of money they can get, whether that's through increased benefit claims, grants or access to white goods. Last year they were able to bring in over £4m of extra money for our customers which is a phenomenal achievement.

Some of you will also know about our Purple Pantry on Moor Nook, set up to provide access to affordable food for all our customers. It provides a range of fresh, frozen and store-cupboard essentials, so we recommend that you check it out. We will continue to look for ways to further help customers.

What are you going to do to make your existing homes more energy efficient, especially given growing energy costs?

We are investing in our services to meet the government targets which state that all homes should have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of band C by 2030. Currently, over 5,000 of our properties meet this standard. We're also making sure that our new-build

homes are well in excess of EPC rating C by installing energy efficiency technology such as solar panels and modern heating systems, to keep bills low for customers.

Is Community Gateway planning on building any two-bed bungalows for older people?

We have a huge waiting list for all types of accommodation and we simply don't have the capital in our development programme to build enough homes to house everybody on the waiting list. We do try to build a range of properties but have to prioritise the types with most demand and the vast majority of people waiting need family-sized homes. Nevertheless, we have just built 4 two-bed bungalows, with more in the pipeline and are currently building another Extra Care Scheme for older people.

What happens when people don't maintain their gardens?

We have a popular concessionary gardening scheme for people struggling to maintain their gardens, which costs just under £8 a week. In the last 12 months we called at over 6,300 properties – all our homes that had their own garden. 6,000 of these had gardens that were either at an acceptable level or very good. We handed out almost 1,200 thank you cards to some of the shining examples.

We found just under 400 gardens that weren't maintained to an acceptable level or safe, so

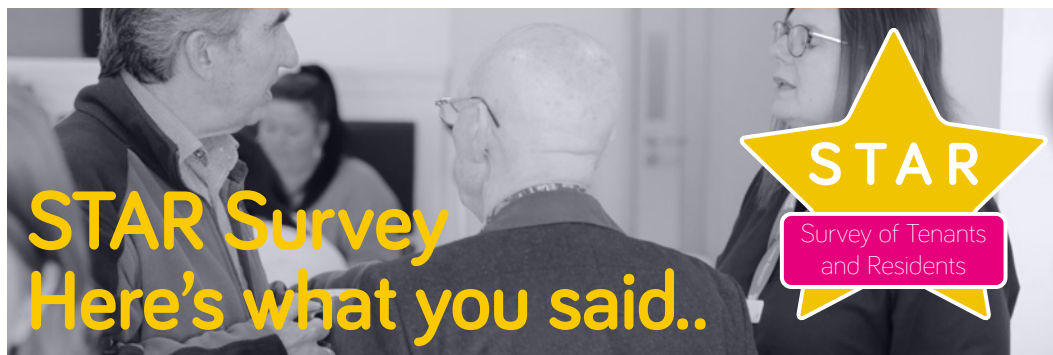
we spoke with tenants to find out why. Three months later, 95% of those gardens had improved, either because tenants had a tidy up or taken up our concessionary gardening service or we found them help from voluntary agencies.

We are not afraid to act if people won't maintain their gardens and have taken legal action on 12 cases, with 50 ongoing cases where we are working with tenants.



Residents pose questions to our Executive team

We would like to thank everyone who attended our AGM and hope to see lots more of you next year. If you would like to see what happened on the night, please visit www.communitygateway.co.uk/agm.



A very BIG thank you to all our tenants and residents who took the time to complete this year's STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents). We very much appreciate all your feedback and have already made some positive changes to the ways we work as a direct result.

Following a couple of years of uncertainty for everyone, Housing Associations and other service providers have seen a decline in satisfaction with services. Whilst we have seen a general overall decline, in some areas we are pleased to see a number of our services received excellent feedback and scores for customer satisfaction.

Here's a summary of what you told us and how we performed.

Overall satisfaction

85% of customers are satisfied overall.

Customer Service is really important to us. Comments received highlighted that we don't always get our communication with you right. This will be an area of focus for us in the future.



Getting Involved

We have seen almost a 10% increase with your satisfaction with opportunities to get involved.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our team delivered a high variety of appealing opportunities that benefitted the communities in which you live.



Greenspaces

Unsurprisingly, satisfaction with how we care for Greenspaces declined. COVID-19 did mean we had to pause this service and work very differently but we are now catching up and getting back on top.



Value For Money

We are disappointed that satisfaction in this area has slightly declined. Our rents are lower than other Housing Associations in the area. Working with you, we are keen to understand how we can better demonstrate value for money.

We are looking at ways in which we can keep our rents affordable and our consultation meetings with tenants held in October will help us shape the services we provide.



Online Services

More and more of you are using our online services, an increase this year of 16%. With an increased appetite for these types of services we will be developing further opportunities for you to access our services online.



Repairs Service

88% of you said you were pleased with our repairs service, an increase on the last survey which is great news. Customer satisfaction with our repairs service is high when we compare ourselves with other Housing Associations across the country.



Your Area

We work hard to improve your satisfaction with your neighbourhood as a place to live. We also work in partnership with others who deliver services in our areas. The recent consultation with tenants will support our mission to get your priorities heard at the right tables.



Fairness And Respect

With a satisfaction rate of over 85% this is an area that means a lot to us, our tenants are at the heart of what we do and how you feel we treat you is important.



Our Priorities

Since we received your STAR feedback, we have carried out further consultation to learn how we can improve our services and shape those that are important to you. The key message coming across is that we don't always get our communication with you right, therefore we will make sure we focus on keeping you informed and updating you regularly during the coming year.

This newsletter is
also available at
**communitygateway.co.uk/
gatewaynews** where you
can use '**Recite Me**' to
translate it into another
language or read it out loud.



If you have a story to share and/or events
and activities in the coming year,
let us know all about it...

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with what's going on at Gateway.

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Tenant only Facebook Group

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me along with the rest of your cardboard waste.

