

SPRING 2022



**Wirral Methodist
Housing Association**

BUZZ

info@wmhaltld.org.uk

TEL.0151 647 5471

www.wmhaltld.org.uk



**Association board
enhanced by new
appointments**

**Meet your
new Housing
Officers**

**Improved repair
and maintenance
service now live**

Welcome from the Chief Executive

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of your Buzz newsletter. I hope that you enjoy this magazine and that you find the information helpful. We would love to hear what you think about the Buzz newsletter, you can do this by emailing info@wmha.org.uk

Just as Spring is the season of renewal for our natural environment, there is also a great deal of renewal going on at Wirral Methodist Housing Association, as we strive to create the best homes and communities that we can.

It's fantastic to see three new, talented and experienced members join our Board. Sandra, Kerry and Craig bring with them decades of experience in the sector to strengthen our board and challenge us to deliver outstanding services to our tenants.

We are very excited to announce that HMS are our new contractor for the majority of repairs. HMS is an experienced contractor who will offer our tenants a simpler and more convenient service.

You can find out more by visiting our website www.wmhaltd.org.uk.

The cost of living pressures are considerable for most people at present. We have included ways you can seek help if you are struggling. Finally, we are introducing two new Housing Officers who are here to help and provide the best possible service to our tenants.

Wirral Methodist is constantly looking to improve our services. We have many exciting development projects in the pipeline to provide more homes for local people.

You can also stay up to date on the latest Wirral Methodist news by following us on Twitter @WMHALTD

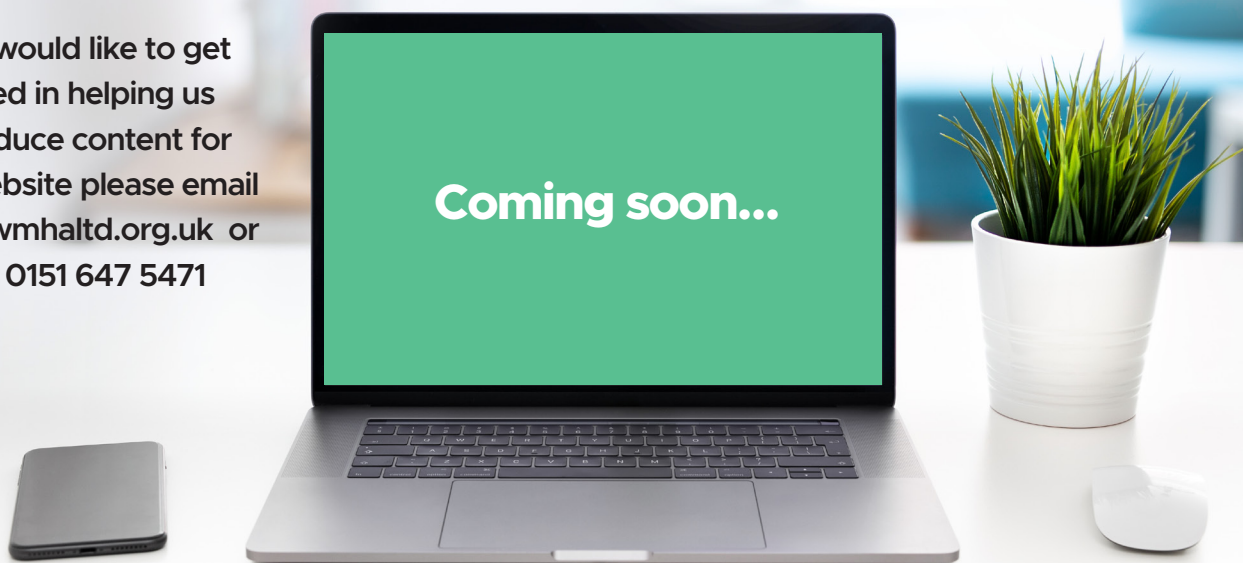
Paul Carhart
Chief Executive Office



Coming soon...

We will shortly be launching our brand-new website which we hope will make it easier for you to access the information you need. Keep an eye out on our social media channels to be the first to find out when we launch!

If you would like to get involved in helping us to produce content for the website please email info@wmhaltd.org.uk or phone 0151 647 5471



**Wirral Methodist
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Wirral Methodist Welcomes New Board Members

On the 1st March 2022, we were delighted to welcome three new members to our Board: Craig Sparrow, Kerry Scott and Sandra Simmons, who were appointed to build on the existing skillset of the Board in key areas such as tenant engagement and the development of new homes.

Craig Sparrow is Executive Director of Development at Clwyd Alyn Housing and brings a wealth of experience in operational management and the delivery of new homes.

Kerry Scott is a well-established independent development consultant in the North West and beyond, having also held senior roles at not-for-profit housing organisations across the North.

Sandra Simmons brings a great deal of lived experience as a tenant and resident of Birkenhead. With extensive education experience and a focus on improvement, Sandra will also take up a position on the Associations Tenants and Communications Committee.

Chair of the board Bryan McPaul, said ‘ We look forward to welcoming our new colleagues to the Association’s Board and are delighted to have strengthened our ability to deliver excellent services and build new homes for those in greatest need’.

As part of the board members introduction to the organisation, we gave them a tour of our properties and development sites throughout the Wirral so they could get a wider sense of who we are an organisation



and the community we serve. The new board members had the opportunity to meet the wonderful team they will be working with and some of our tenants.

We are excited to be working with Kerry, Craig and Sandra and look forward to their contribution to Wirral Methodist Housing Association.

Meet Our New Repairs Contractor



At Wirral Methodist Housing Association, we are always looking to improve our service to customers. That's why we have launched a new repairs service using just one contractor – HMS.

We are delighted that our 4-year Repairs and Maintenance contract with HMS is now live, enabling us to continue to ensure that your home is well maintained, safe and secure.

There will be no change to the standards of work that you can expect, but using a single contractor for the vast majority of our repairs will enable us to offer you a much more convenient and streamlined service.

We will now be able to offer you a specific appointment to suit you and your availability when you report your repair. HMS will confirm your appointment by text and they'll let you know that they are on their way.

Under our new service, we have three categories of repairs:

Emergency Repairs:

These are emergencies which are likely to cause injury or death or substantial property damage. These will be handled by HMS both during the day and out of hours service and the response target time to attend and make safe is within 4 hours.

Urgent Repairs:

These are faults that may cause inconvenience to you but little possibility of further property damage if dealt with within the specified target time. The response target time is within 5 working days.

Routine Repairs:

These are faults that are not hazardous, or which cause minor inconvenience to a tenant. The response target time is within 20 working days.

Reporting repairs

Remember that the best way to report your repairs is by calling 0151 647 5471.

We hope that you will be pleased with the new service, but as ever please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns.

Stay safe

Now that HMS are carrying out the majority of our repairs, it will be even easier to be safe and secure in your home. HMS will let you know when they are on their way to carry out a job and will arrive at your home in vans with both the HMS logo and Wirral Methodist Housing association logo on the side. Keep a look out for the van and don't let anyone in who doesn't have ID and a booked appointment. Ring us on 0151 647 5471 if you are unsure.



**Wirral Methodist
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We're Here to Listen

Want to have your say? Join TAG today

We want to give our tenants an opportunity to have their voices heard and that's where TAG - our Tenants Advisory Group - steps in. The purpose of TAG is to review, advise and suggest solutions to ensure we are giving our tenants everything they need.

We are looking for new members to join TAG. Do you want the opportunity to help to make real change to improve the lives of our tenants? Email Tag@wmhalted.org.uk today and we will be in touch.

Have you registered for MyHome?

MyHome allows you to report repairs, pay your rent and check for the latest information. Visit www.wmhalted.org.uk to register today.

What have TAG achieved so far?

TAG recently reviewed the MyHome portal to see if it was fit for purpose. TAG helped us to identify several areas for improvement:

1. The ability to create a 'communal account' where all tenants who share the property can see in the information for communal repairs
2. Being able to ask for more detail when reporting a repair
3. The provision of updated information on jobs raised provided
4. Additional useful information about communal areas, such as replacement or painting programmes



Cuppa and a Chat

On the 27th April we were delighted to welcome some of our tenants to the Lauries Centre in Birkenhead for a 'Cuppa and a Chat'. This was an opportunity for us to listen to tenants, encourage them to have their say, raise the issues that matter to them the most and meet some staff and board members, all whilst enjoying a cup of tea and some cake.

We got some excellent feedback that will help us develop our service further to ensure we are giving our tenants the best experience we can. Our tenants raised concerns around anti-social behaviour, repairs, communications and having more opportunities for tenants to get involved.

We were joined by PC A Smart on behalf of Merseyside Police who advised the tenants that it's important to always report anti-social behaviour either online or by calling 111. He also spoke about how Merseyside police and Wirral Methodist Housing Association work closely together to tackle anti-social behaviour and keep our community safe.

We took on board concerns about repairs and are confident that due to our new partnership with HMS (see page 4) we will be able to offer a much more convenient repairs service.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the tenants that took part and to PC A Smart!

Keep an eye out for more events coming to you shortly!

Meet Your New Housing Officers



Lucy Cooper

"I have worked in housing for over 5 years I am currently studying my Chartered Institute of Housing Level 3 in Housing and Property Management. I look after parts of Birkenhead, Wallasey, Seacombe, Prenton, Woodchurch and Hoylake. I wanted to work for a local Housing Association so I could be more hands on and get more involved with improving our tenant's lives. WMHA has a good reputation and a local approach and both of these reasons attracted me to apply at WMHA. I love that no day is ever the same! I love all the different people I get to meet but the absolute best feeling is giving someone a home of their own, especially when they have been through a difficult experience. My goals for this year are completing my 'patch walk abouts' and to meet as many of my tenants as possible. I am involved in a few different community events that will be happening this year, and to spend my budget making improvements in areas that need it the most."



Kerry Watterson

"I have worked in housing for over 20 years. I have lots of experience in general needs and supported housing. I have an excellent understanding of the challenges people are faced with when requiring housing and have provided support and assistance to many individuals to help them sustain their tenancies successfully. I cover Central Birkenhead, Rock Ferry, Tranmere, Bromborough and Ellesmere Port. I love the Wirral and I want to help improve opportunities for others living here. There's many aspects of the role I enjoy, however my favourite part is calling back to a property once the tenant has settled and seeing how they have turned the house, into their home. My goals for this year are to continue to meet the tenants and get involved in events such as the Queen's Jubilee taking place in June. I am always looking at ways that I can help to shape and improve the local community."



**Wirral Methodist
Housing Association**

Supporting you in difficult times

Your wellbeing is our priority at Wirral Methodist Housing Association.

We know that the cost of living crisis is placing huge amounts of pressure on household budgets. If you are struggling, please get in touch today.

Support is available

Help if you are having problems paying your rent

We have a dedicated rent officer who you can contact if you are having problems paying your rent. Jan Charlton can be contacted by calling 0151 647 5471 or by emailing info@wmhltd.org.uk. It's best to get in touch as soon as you fall into difficulty with paying your rent. To help, we can:

- Offer you a private interview at our office or in your home
- Check if you can claim help towards your housing costs

- Work out reasonable repayments to help you pay the money you owe
- Assist you in accessing debt related advice to enable you to maximise your income

Help with Fuel Bills

Don't miss out on benefits. Citizen's advice offer free, confidential advice on what to do if you are struggling to pay your energy bills. You may be entitled to benefit and support from the government.

You can call Citizen's advice on 0800 144 8848 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk.



Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

We have recently carried out tenant satisfaction surveys via telephone calls. We are currently collecting the data and will be sharing this with you soon. These surveys help us identify areas where improvement is needed by listening to our tenants directly. Thank you to all of our tenants who took part in the survey.

Contacting us and Our Services

Our office is open on an appointment only basis, but there are still a number of ways of getting in touch with us.

Give us a call: **0151 647 5471**

Email us: info@wmhaltd.org.uk

Visit www.wmhaltd.org.uk and fill in our online contact form

HOW TO REPORT A REPAIR

If you want to report a repair during office hours call **0151 647 5471** (Mon-Thur 9-5pm). If your repair is outside of these hours, please press 1 when you call and this will direct you to our out of hour's service.

You can use the MyHome portal to request a repair.

How can I make a complaint?

- email us: info@wmhaltd.org.uk
- Using the website www.wmhaltd.org.uk
- Call us: **0151 647 5471**
- Speak to a member of staff, or Scheme Manager
- Write to us
- Request a visit by appointment.

For the Latest News follow us on Twitter @WMHALTD



Our Front Cover photo was provided by the tenants of Lee Court who take great pride in looking after their beautiful garden.

A not for profit organisation

Registered office: 42 Hamilton Street, Birkenhead CH41 5AE

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