The Listening Post

Welcome to your first resident newsletter for a while. This edition has a number of articles from the Midlands and East Anglia, which we hope you will find interesting, plus a helpful section at the back about the support available to residents.

Over the last few months, MTVH has been working on several projects to improve how we listen to residents and take action:

- HACT (Housing Associations’ Charitable Trust) has completed the first phase of its independent review of how we listen and work with all residents. There will be a resident workshop in October, before recommendations go to our Board later this year.
- We are pleased to be one of the first to work with the National Housing Federation (NHF) on the development of the Together with Tenants charter. Over 130 housing associations are collaborating to develop a clear set of service standards and to share best practice. All of this involves working closely with our residents to hear their opinions.
- A National Customer Voice survey went out to over 20,000 MTVH residents in July. Thanks to everyone who responded with suggestions to shape how we create new resident groups and improved communication. Look out for more information in the next edition on what residents told us and what we will do in response.

DO YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED?
Have you got a story or article for future issues? Have you got great ideas to help us improve communication with residents? We would love to hear from you – please contact us at yourvoice@mtvh.co.uk

Come and eat at one of our Super Kitchens

Super Kitchens offer nutritious, home cooked food at low cost, with a two course lunch on offer for £2.50! Our latest Super Kitchen (in partnership with Rushcliffe Borough Council) is in Cotgrave at the Miners Welfare and is open from midday every Thursday.

Other Super Kitchens you can visit are:
- Woodvale, Wollaton Vale, Wollaton NG8 2PX – every Tuesday from midday
- Chestnut Avenue Community Centre, Bingham NG13 8AU – every other Thursday from midday
- St James Centre, Malcolm Street, Derby DE23 8LU – every Wednesday and Thursday from midday.

As an extra bonus if you visit our St James Super Kitchen 5 times, your 6th meal will be free!

So come and eat with us, and if you’d like to volunteer contact Ewa Van De Schootbrugge on 020 3535 3347 or ewa.vandeschootbrugge@mtvh.co.uk

Above: MTVH resident, Tanya, who runs the Derby Super Kitchen pictured with Nick, a regular customer (and MTVH resident).
Left: Farah, one of the volunteers at the Cotgrave Super Kitchen.
NEW YOUTH PROJECTS IN NOTTINGHAM
@Hillview Community Centre
• Epic Play: ages 8-11 on Wednesdays 4-5pm
• Epic Youth Night: ages 11-16 Wednesdays 5-6pm

KEEN TO DO A MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA) COURSE?
If you’re a MTVH resident aged 16 or older book your place with Ewa Van De Schootbrugge on 020 3535 3347 or email ewa.vande.schootbrugge@mtvh.co.uk/training@metropolitan.org.uk
Thursday 24 October 10am-4pm Raleigh House, 68-84 Alfreton Road, Nottingham, NG7 3NN

A dramatic incident motivated parish councillor Polly, a resident of Highfields Caldecote, near Cambridge, to bring together the community and raise money for a defibrillator. Her mission started a few years ago when a young person on the sports field stopped breathing and needed CPR.

“Ours is a village of young and old people and we didn’t have the facility for emergency response. The ambulance takes a long time to get here so in a crisis the only way of getting help rapidly is by helicopter”, she explains.

Thanks to generous donations, £2,579 was raised to purchase the defibrillator. If a similar incident happens in the future, this device can restore a normal heartbeat by delivering an electric pulse to the heart. Twelve people in the community will now be trained to operate the defibrillator and to administer CPR.

Residents of Jankyns Place, Bury St Edmunds, are delighted with the gardening project we have funded to help them overcome social isolation. Raised flower beds at the centre of the scheme have been renovated and new ones have been constructed. Greener Growth, a charity, has taught residents gardening techniques so they can confidently cultivate plants. Residents’ care workers from Julian Support have supported and encouraged them to achieve their personal well-being goals.

One resident said the project had made a big difference to his eating habits. With fresh salad ingredients and herbs virtually on his doorstep, he is now interested in healthy eating. More residents are socialising and taking part in regular garden maintenance days as well as other social activities like community cooking events and gardening courses.

Did you know?

In the last year 41 homes were allocated to new residents as a result of our ongoing drive to track down fraudsters who have illegally sublet.
We believe it is important for young people to have a voice in their communities. In Nottingham we are supporting this by partnering with local social enterprise, Think for the Future. Together we have set up a panel of young people aged 12-15 years called The Young Voices Group. They are keen to see improvements on their estates such as more lighting and litter bins, and better local park equipment. They have supported Nottingham City Council to decide which organisations should be awarded funding to support young people.

Want to get involved?

If you’re a MTVH resident in the Derby and Nottingham areas and would like to develop new resident activities, why not contact Gary Bennett who leads the Metropolitan North Residents Community Association?

The group meets and speaks with residents, especially in our older people’s schemes, and helps them create their own activities and special events. “We’re always looking for new and innovative ways to make residents’ lives better,” says Gary.

For more information contact Ewa Van De Schouwbroeck at ewa.vanadeskbroeck@mtvh.co.uk or 020 3535 3347, or via Facebook by searching ‘MNRCA’.

Developing future community leaders

We believe it is important for young people to have a voice in their communities. In Nottingham we are supporting this by partnering with local social enterprise, Think for the Future. Together we have set up a panel of young people aged 12-15 years called The Young Voices Group. They are keen to see improvements on their estates such as more lighting and litter bins, and better local park equipment. They have supported Nottingham City Council to decide which organisations should be awarded funding to support young people.

YEAR IN NUMBERS

While things change politically and economically, we have a stable base to continue to deliver good services to you. From building new homes for rent and sale, supporting residents into paid work and investing in modernising more homes than ever, to developing new care and support services, fixing repairs first time and making homes safer, here are some of the highlights of what we’ve delivered over the last year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New homes built</td>
<td>1,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes development pipeline</td>
<td>6,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes investment</td>
<td>£118m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes investment</td>
<td>£361m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of repairs fixed</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Valley Housing</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New kitchens</td>
<td>747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New bathrooms</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New boilers</td>
<td>2,328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1,800+ residents supported into employment and training
Need advice to help get a job?

We offer:
- Advice and guidance
- CV and application support
- Interview preparation
- Training and apprenticeships
- Bursaries
- One-to-one support
- Financial assistance and travel support

Get in touch with us:
- **Nottingham**: Stuart Whitehead 07701 388828
  stuart.whitehead@mtvh.co.uk
- **Rushcliffe & North**: Philip Parr 07738 713989
  philip.parr@mtvh.co.uk
- **Derby**: Sarah Skidmore 07760 777488,
  sarah.skidmore@mtvh.co.uk

Money advice

Are you a resident in need of money advice and/or benefits advice?
Here are some of the issues we regularly help residents with:
- Housing benefit
- Universal Credit
- Council tax
- Debt
- Energy bills
- Savings and budgeting
- Accessing grants
- Opening bank accounts

For more info go to [www.metropolitan.org.uk](http://www.metropolitan.org.uk) or contact:
- **Derby**: David Wright, 07738 713983
  email: david.wright@mtvh.co.uk
- **Nottingham**: Julian O’Neill, 07711 590648
  email: julian.oneill@mtvh.co.uk
- **Cambridge**: Please contact either David or Julian.

Looking after YOU

Do you want to help reduce your stress, anxiety, depression, fatigue, while improving sleep quality and resilience? We’re offering a new online ‘Be Mindful’ course. We’ve already successfully run a Mental Health Awareness course and a Mental Health First Aid course.

In fact, over the past year, 1,141 residents went on 224 training courses and we’ve awarded 28 bursaries to residents who are now a step closer to reaching their career goals. Want to know more?

For more information contact your Community Investment Officer on 020 3535 3535 or email Dawn on training@metropolitan.org.uk. ■

HELP SHAPE MTVH ONLINE

We’re creating a new online service for all MTVH residents. It will make it easy to make payments, request repairs, update contact details and make enquiries. If you would like to be involved in our research and testing, please drop us a line on mtvhonline@mtvh.co.uk. No IT skills or experience required. ■

MTVH partners with Creative Living, a creative arts project supporting over 55s in Derby to live rich and fulfilling lives within their communities.

Chris, resident leader of the group, says: “Most people have no idea what they can do – they end up surprising themselves.”

Want to know more? Please get in touch on info@artcoreuk.com

Want to contact us? Call our contact centre on 020 3535 3535
- [www.mtvh.co.uk](http://www.mtvh.co.uk)
- Twitter: @MetTVH
- Facebook: @MTVHA

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Thanks to ongoing advice about money, employment and training, Dawn is getting her life back on track. Our team has also helped her update her CV, register on job search websites and linked her to a work coach at her local job centre. “It’s been a scary road, but I’m finding my way with all the help and support I’ve been given,” she says.