

# Uncha At home

“

**A fresh start  
for me and  
my kids  
after having  
nowhere to  
call our own.**

”

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new home on pages 4 -5

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# Welcome to the first issue of **At home** magazine

Hello! We hope you enjoy our new magazine, **At home**.



**Holly Dagnall**  
Director of Homes and Wellbeing

We know what a difference the right home and support can make to someone's life. Here at NCHA, we're really proud of the part we play in helping people to live their best lives.

Replacing Link and Voicebox, our new magazine, **At Home**, is filled with inspiring stories from our customers who describe how a safe place to call home can make a big difference. Huge thanks to everyone who's chosen to share their experience with us.

We want our future magazines to feature more stories about our customers and their lives. If you've got something you'd like to share, please get in touch!



**Your email address will not be shared with anyone else** - read our privacy policy on our website if you'd like to know more about NCHA's commitment to your data.



## Interested in hearing more news from NCHA?

Sign up for our free email alerts and have our updates delivered to your inbox.

**You can choose the topics you're most interested in** - everything from job vacancies and ways to get involved with NCHA, to new homes and advice on making your money go further.

**You can alter your subscription or unsubscribe at any time** - simply follow the link at the foot of any of our newsletters.

If you need this in another language or format please telephone 0800 013 8555 or email [info@ncha.org.uk](mailto:info@ncha.org.uk)

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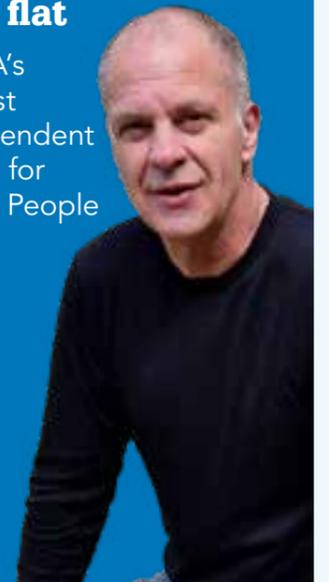
A fresh start for me and my kids



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# Natisha's new start in her new home

For Natisha, the transition of moving into a new home was a breath of fresh air. With a spacious three-bedroom house and a garden to enjoy, she finally has a place to call home on our new development in Alfreton, Derbyshire.

"We were living with my mum in her guest bedroom and I was struggling with depression. I had to move away from where I was living in Heanor, but I am happy to start fresh in my new three-bedroom house. Being allocated this lovely brand-new house has been a blessing, especially for my children."

Natisha has three children aged nine, six and two. Her eldest son has autism, so it was especially important to her that he settled in well.

"My children have made some brilliant friends on the street, all three of them have kids who come and call for them to play out. Because the street is a cul-de-sac it feels really safe for children to play."

But it's not just the children who've made friends, Natisha has made some strong bonds too.

"The friends I've made here are incredible, I can't believe we've only known each other for eight months. We have a street What's App group and we've done lots of fun things together like a 'Bake Off' competition, board games nights and a communal barbecue. But I know I can rely on them too, there's always a neighbour who'll help if I need someone to watch the kids for a few minutes or if I've run out milk. It's a fantastic community."

“  
The friends I've made  
here are incredible, I can't  
believe we've only known  
each other for eight months.  
”

William Carter Close,  
Alfreton



This development transformed a previously unused area of Alfreton, creating 34 much-needed, quality homes for rent near the vibrant town centre.

A range of homes, including one-bed maisonettes, two, three and four-bed houses have been designed to benefit local people. All have been fully let through Amber Valley Borough Council and managed by our housing team.

It was named after William Carter, who was born in 1830 on Colliery Road in the town, who went on to become a pioneer of knitted goods. The company he established in the United States still exists today and is one of the largest producers of children's clothes.

This development was made possible with support from Homes England funding.



# Helping to find the right person for the job

At NCHA we keep our customers at the heart of the services we deliver and the decisions we make.

So when we recently recruited for an assistant director to head up our care and support services, it was vital that our customers were involved in the process.

## Meet Lizzie

Lizzie has been a customer of NCHA for nine years, living in a service with dedicated support that helps her live life to the fullest.

Having supported our recruitment in the past, she was the perfect choice to help find the new Assistant Director for Care and Support.

When she first got the call, she was nervous, but it was still a firm "yes". She explains:

“

I've been an interviewer before, to help find new people to work where I live. I wanted to help make sure that we got a really good person to manage all the care and support staff and look after all the customers.

”

## Supporting decision making

Lizzie played a vital role - meeting each of the candidates before the interview panel, and had some important questions to ask including: 'What is your biggest achievement?' and: 'Why do you think you'll be perfect for the job?'

She fed back her comments to the panel: **"I thought that all of the people we interviewed were really good, but one candidate really stood out for me, because of what she said about supporting young people who are homeless. She talked about how important it is to work with them, and that it's never too late to help them. She said that all they need is a bit of love and care and support, and I thought that was amazing."**

Laura Henderson, Customer Engagement Manager supported Lizzie through the interview: **"Lizzie did a brilliant job! She really enjoyed the whole process and was really confident with her questions. Her report on each candidate really helped the panel to make their final decision."**

The panel offered the role to Colette O'Neill. With a background of more than 20 years' experience at NCHA, she'll begin her new role in the next few weeks.



## Customer engagement

Being an involved customer is really important to Lizzie. She likes to keep busy, but she also wants to give something back to the service that she says has changed her life.

“

**This is the longest I've ever lived anywhere, even when I was a child. I say it all the time, NCHA has changed my life. I love living here and I want to help out.**

”

# Your voice, your impact – get paid to make a difference

We're looking for people to join our customer groups. We've got vacancies on our Homes and Neighbourhoods, Scrutiny, and Care and Support Customer Voice panels.

This rewarding opportunity allows you to be part of something that can make a real difference in your community.

You'll have your say in shaping the services that matter to you, while being rewarded for your time and insight.

## Why join?

- **Get rewarded:** your feedback is valuable to us, and we'll compensate you for your time with payment or vouchers, whichever you'd prefer.
- **Have your say:** influence decisions that impact your home and community
- **Flexibility:** choose the right group to fit around your life and commitments

“ You have your voice heard and the chance to help other customers. I've made friends, and there are plenty of perks. We even get a free lunch!

”

**Toyin,**  
Homes and Neighbourhood Panel member,  
Leicester

## Interested?

It's really easy to get started. Visit our website for more information [www.ncha.org.uk](http://www.ncha.org.uk), or contact our Customer Engagement team who can talk you through our customer engagement opportunities on **0800 0158555** or email [customerengagement@ncha.org.uk](mailto:customerengagement@ncha.org.uk)

Take a look at our website for all of our customer engagement opportunities  
[www.ncha.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.ncha.org.uk/get-involved)



# Gardening tips



**Bob is an NCHA tenant who lives in Colsterworth in Lincolnshire. He's spent many hours perfecting his wildlife friendly garden and as a result he's been the successful winner of NCHA's annual gardening competition twice!**

Ahead of this year's competition, Bob shares his tips on how to create a garden like his.



Creating a wildlife-friendly garden gave me great pleasure and I had a wonderful feeling that I was helping nature. If I can persuade just one person to give it a go and help nature too, I would be thankful.

## Transform your garden into a sanctuary for wildlife with these tips from Bob:

1



### Choosing your plants

Choose plants that can be easily accessed by insects and birds, in other words, choose flowers that open well to allow insects to be able to get inside them to get at the pollen. Some flowers have petals that are tightly formed so that they cannot be entered. I chose lots of lavender plants, the bees love them, and sedum plants are good too. Wild flowers are also great for nature, just buy a bag of wild flower seeds and they go a long way.

2

### Offer year-round food sources

**Seasonal blooms:** Plant flowers that bloom in succession (for example, crocuses bloom in spring, sunflowers in summer and asters in autumn).

**Berries and seeds:** Include shrubs like elderberry for birds. I chose several pyracantha and planted them up against a fence. Gradually they form a hedge where birds can nest and feel safe because of the vicious looking thorns. Eventually they form berries which the blackbirds love.

**Night-blooming flowers:** Attract moths and bats with evening primrose or moonflowers.



3

### Provide water sources

**Birdbaths:** Add a shallow dish with stones for perching.

**Ponds/puddles:** Even a small water feature supports frogs, insects, and birds.



4

### Create shelter and nesting spaces

If you have room, use trees, shrubs, and ground cover to mimic natural habitats. Dense shrubs and hedges attract birds.

**Wild corners:** Leave leaf piles, logs, or untamed areas for insects, hedgehogs, and amphibians. Nettles attract butterflies, so leave some in your garden, but be careful as they spread!



5

### Avoid pesticides and chemicals

**Go organic:** Pesticides harm pollinators and disrupt food chains. Use companion planting (e.g. marigolds to deter pests) or natural predators like ladybirds.



## Enter our garden competition for 2025

If you're proud of your garden, why not take part and show off your hard work! This year we have some fantastic prizes:

We'll recognise the top gardens with first, second and third place prizes of **£100, £75 and £50 in vouchers**. But that's not all...

We've also got **£25 vouchers** for winners of these categories:

- Best vegetable garden
- Best community / communal garden
- Best small space / hanging basket, planters or window box.

### How to enter

Send us your photos, the category you're entering for and your name and address, **by 31 August 2025**.

**Email:** [customerengagement@ncha.org.uk](mailto:customerengagement@ncha.org.uk)  
**Text or WhatsApp:** 07921 485646

Please get in touch with the **Customer Engagement team on 0800 013 8555** if you require someone to come to take photos for you.

# Sutton House is open

We've officially opened a new service in the Radford area of Nottingham for families experiencing homelessness.

**With 48 independent flats for adults and children, Sutton House offers secure short-term accommodation for families while they look for a more permanent home.**

Many of the families at Sutton House have joined us from months in unsuitable hotel accommodation, often having to pack up and move on with less than 12 hours' notice. This new stepping-stone service will support positive mental health and improved wellbeing for parents and their children, by reducing uncertainty and anxiety.

The service offers a lifeline for dozens of families, giving them stability and opportunity to eat better, sleep better and make new friends.

NCHA colleagues will be on hand to help residents move toward long-term accommodation and plan for a new independent future.

Sutton House is a four-year commissioned service by Nottingham City Council. It is the latest project in partnership between NCHA and the council, and part of their collaborative commitment to help alleviate homelessness in the city.

## Sutton House residents say...

Lucy is a young mum currently living at Sutton House. She'd stayed in various hotels with her young children, before being moved to Sutton House. She said:

“It was really hard living out of one-room hotels. Every Monday we'd have to go back to hand the keys in and find out if we'd have to pack up and move that same day. It's nice here, we have a separate kitchen, we can cook our own food.”

Resident Leena is helping others settle in, sharing food with other families and creating a sense of community. She says:

“I was a bit unsure when I first walked in, but as soon as my son came back from school he said “Oh, it's nice here mum”. He loves that we have a separate living room and a communal lounge with lots of donated toys. He's making friends already.”

It's really hard on the kids when we have to move all the time, I really hope we can stay here until we get our own house. I want to find a home where we can be safe, I don't want them to have to worry about where we're going to live anymore.”

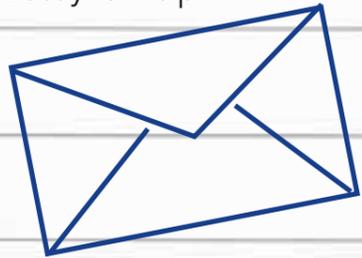


# A day in the life of ... Sara

Sara is our Domestic Abuse Support Coordinator, working with customers who are experiencing, or may be at risk of domestic abuse.

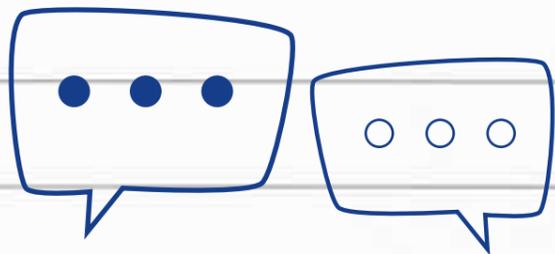
## I start each day...

by checking emails and phone messages, to see if any new concerns have come in. It's important that I get in touch with all new referrals quickly, so it's important I pick these messages up first thing. Some requests for support come from other NCHA colleagues, and some people call us directly for help.



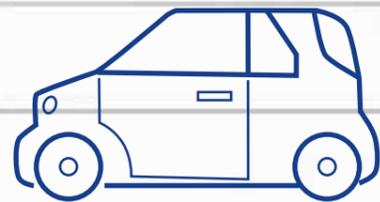
## Most days are split in two...

half of the day I am picking up new cases, and the rest of the day I'm speaking to people I'm already supporting. I'm usually supporting many tenants at any one time. I also spend a lot of time teaching my colleagues at NCHA of the signs of domestic abuse, and what to do if they're worried about someone.



## I do a lot of driving...

I support customers all over the East Midlands. I clock up a lot of miles! But it's really important that people get to see me face-to-face, it's the best way to establish trust. I'll often meet people in their own home, but it can just as easily be a coffee shop or NCHA offices – wherever they feel safe.



## I spend a lot of time on the phone...

talking to other agencies, like specialist domestic abuse services. People often worry that they're putting their tenancy at risk by talking to me. It couldn't be further from the truth. We will always do everything we can to make a customer safer in their home, and make sure they're in touch with the best people to help.



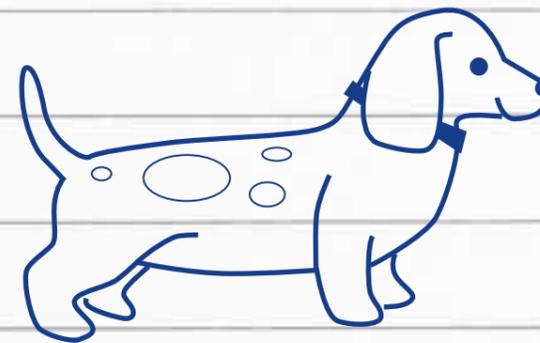
## It can be hard to say goodbye...

When I meet a customer for the first time, they're often overwhelmed and can't see a way out of their situation. My role is to point them in the right direction and introduce them to support agencies. I'll never walk away from a case until I know they're getting the help they need.



## At the end of the day...

it can be hard to switch off. As soon as the day is done, I'll often be straight out the door, taking my dog for a walk – it really helps. He keeps me well and ready for the next day.



If you're concerned you may be experiencing domestic abuse or you are witnessing domestic abuse, please get in touch on **0800 013 8555**.

**If you, or someone else is in immediate danger from domestic abuse, dial 999 and tell the police.**

You can also contact the National Domestic Abuse Helpline for advice and support: ring them on **0808 2000 247** at any time. A charity called Respect runs an advice line for men, which is **0808 801 0327**.

\*We don't share Sara's surname or photo to protect her and the customers she supports.

# ncha news round-up

## Better Lives Awards 2024

In November we celebrated the achievements of our customers and colleagues at our Better Lives Awards. Special congratulations to our customers Patricia and Solana who both won awards for demonstrating their strength, resilience and community spirit.



## New Assistant Director

Congratulations to Colette O'Neill who has recently been appointed to the post of Assistant Director of Care and Support. Colette is succeeding Gemma De Brito who is leaving NCHA at the end June.

## NCHA are the 41st best Workplace in the UK!

Great Place to Work® are a global organisation who recognise employers that have created an outstanding workplace for their employees. Each year they publish the UK's Best Workplaces™ list.

This year we're so proud to have been ranked 41st in the 'super-large' category. We know that colleagues who enjoy their job will provide a better service to our customers. This is why we prioritise things like wellbeing and personal development.

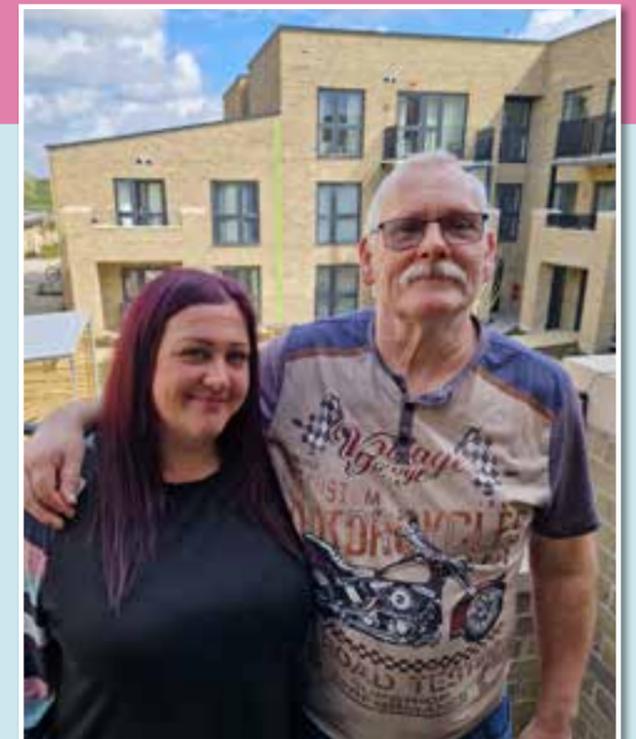


## Farnborough Court opens at our new site in Clifton

Back in November we moved all of our Nottingham office based teams to our new workplace – Clifton Place.

Alongside our office now proudly sits Malone Terrace, which offers 14 homes for supported housing, and Farnborough Court, 56 independent living apartments and bungalows for older people.

Kirstie, Farnborough Court's new Scheme Officer is keeping it in the family having recently helped her father-in-law move into one of the new flats. Here they both are on Ron's new balcony overlooking the shared courtyard.



For more information about Farnborough Court, take a look at our website: [www.ncha.org.uk](http://www.ncha.org.uk)

# From tent to brand new flat

Martyn experienced homelessness before he got a new start in his own NCHA flat in Clifton

Martyn jokes that he was the only man in Nottingham with his own private island, but it's a bitter-sweet comment.

He's just moved into our brand new flats - Farnborough Court in Clifton, Nottingham - but for seven months before that he was living in a tent in the middle of a busy roundabout.

"I'm really happy to share my story," Martyn says.

**"I'm not ashamed of where I've been, with a bit of bad luck homelessness can happen to anyone."**

"I'd had an emergency operation on my leg and couldn't work after that. The benefits I was able to claim didn't cover my private rent and after I told my landlord, he kicked me out."

Within days Martyn found himself completely homeless. He spent a few nights sleeping on the street, and describes it as "cold, wet and horrible."

"I found a lot of people really looked down on me for being on the streets," Martyn explains. "But we don't all fit the stereotype that people have. I don't drink and I've never done drugs. I worked really hard to keep myself mentally ok and active. I made sure I had a wash and clean clothes to put on each day, I learnt where to get support and food, I found all the friendly

coffee shops and I spent time in the library. In the months I was homeless, I read 190 books!"

Being gifted a tent was a big turning point for Martyn: "That tent was my sanctuary. I feel pretty lucky that I had that - I found a spot where people couldn't see me, I had an airbed and eight sleeping bags - I managed to see through the winter that way."

One of the charities supporting Martyn suggested he apply for one of the new flats being built in Clifton, and he was accepted. He's delighted to have now moved into his new home, but the change is taking some getting used to: "The place feels too warm, and my bed is too comfy - I feel like I'm floating! I'm slowly getting used to sleeping in a bed again, but most nights I'll still end up sleeping on the floor."

"The biggest thing this place has given me is peace of mind. At the end of the day I can shut the door on the world and I am safe and warm. I've got an amazing support system around me. NCHA has put me in touch with charities that can help with the furniture I need and Carly the Scheme Manager is just down the hallway if I need her."

"I was so lucky with the support I got. Once I'm settled in, I'm planning on volunteering at one of the charities that helped me. I believe really strongly in the importance of giving back."

“

The biggest thing this place has given me is peace of mind. At the end of the day I can shut the door on the world and I am safe and warm.

”

Farnborough Court is NCHA's newest Independent Living for Older People schemes (ILOPS) offering homes for people over 55 who may need a little bit of extra support to live independently in their own homes. We have schemes like this one all over the East Midlands; find out more:



# Meet Malcolm and Phil



NCHA has over **30 supported living homes** across communities in the East Midlands.

## Lifelong laughs and friendship

In a cozy home in Worksop, two lifelong friends, Malcolm and Phil, share more than just a house. They share a bond built on over 40 years of laughter, friendship, and a firm understanding of one another.

Both have learning disabilities, but that has never defined who they are. What truly defines them is their zest for life, their love of fun, and their friendship which has remained constant throughout the decades.

They've lived together for over ten years now, in a supported living home where staff are always nearby to lend a hand. The support helps them live independently, but the house truly feels like their home. Their housemate, Jez, moved in a few months ago and completes their household.

Between them they have lots of interests. Malcolm is a huge fan of Marvel, wrestling and watching horror films, while Phil loves nothing more than a shopping trip or a day trip on a train. Phil's also a big football fan and supports Manchester United.

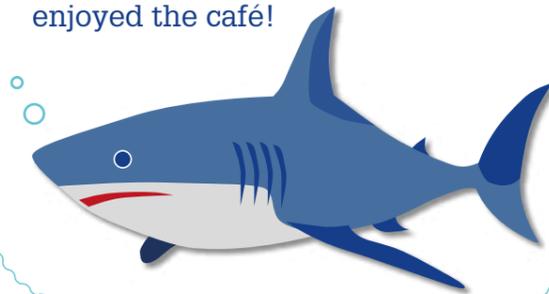
What really brings these two friends together is their shared love of music and socialising.

Phil's favourite artist is Elvis Presley, and he loves to play air guitar when he listens to it. Malcolm is a big fan of Queen, and his favourite song is 'We Will Rock You', which he's well known for performing at karaoke nights. Phil will often air drum along with him!

Their story is a reminder that with the right support and the right friends by your side, life is for finding joy, connections, and making the most of every day.



Malcolm and Phil recently went to 'The Deep' in Hull to visit the sea creatures. They went with their new housemate, Jez. They were amazed by the sharks, and really enjoyed the café!



### Supported living

Supported living is a term used to describe a person-centred approach to providing essential support and care needs to individuals with disabilities or specific needs. Supported living promotes choice and inclusion by offering flexible support tailored to each person's needs and preferences, helping them to live independently in the community.

# Ewen starts a new chapter in an almshouse

Ewen was born in Cheshire, and is a frustrated academic with a love of English, History, Linguistics, and now Law. His early life was full of challenges at home and he then underwent decades of coercive control from his family, who repeatedly targeted his higher education for destruction from his late teens onwards. After many years of struggling with mental illnesses arising from domestic abuse, he made the decision to leave the UK ("I fled my family's control," he said), teaching English overseas to support himself.

But when Ewen returned to the UK in late 2023, his life took a difficult turn. The support he'd been promised by a family member disappeared almost immediately and he found himself homeless at the onset of winter. He couldn't claim benefits because he'd been away from the country for so long. Alone and without money, he ended up living in the woods, just a short walk from where he lives now. Without benefits and refusing to beg, he raided supermarket dumpsters for food in the small hours.

Ewen said, "At 59 and in winter, I found myself homeless for reasons completely out of my control. My life was in crisis."

His mental health deteriorated rapidly and on New Year's Eve, feeling hopeless and lost, Ewen attempted to take his own life. Thankfully, this was also a turning point. While in hospital, Ewen got help from city homelessness services and soon found a place in a winter shelter. He said, "It was a Godsend – three meals a day, warmth, and somewhere safe to stay and to sleep."

He was later moved into a hostel and, finally, referred to NCHA. That's when things started to change for the better.

Ewen moved into one of NCHA's almshouses – a special type of low-cost, self-contained home

offered to people who've suffered hardship. It's in a beautiful old Victorian building, where Ewen lives in a spacious one-bedroom flat on the ground floor.

"When I read the meaning of an almshouse and got to the words 'through no fault of their own', I actually cried," he said. "I thought: finally, people believe me and the life-shattering experiences I've been forced to withstand again and again."

Although the flat was empty when he moved in, Ewen has received donations of good-quality used furniture and household items. His neighbours have welcomed him warmly, and he's been given decorating advice for the future. Slowly, he's getting his life back on track.

Ewen shared, "Calm and unafraid once more thanks to being housed – or rather: homed - by NCHA, I found it unbelievably easy to quit drinking and smoking. Stopped both same day! Best of all, I'm seeing the depression slowly ebbing away, and my motivation is returning pretty strongly now. I've started thinking more creatively and more positively again."

Ewen finally feels safe and is getting support from several services. Most excitingly, he's been studying for a Master's degree in Law specialising in coercive control and has scored very highly in his first work.

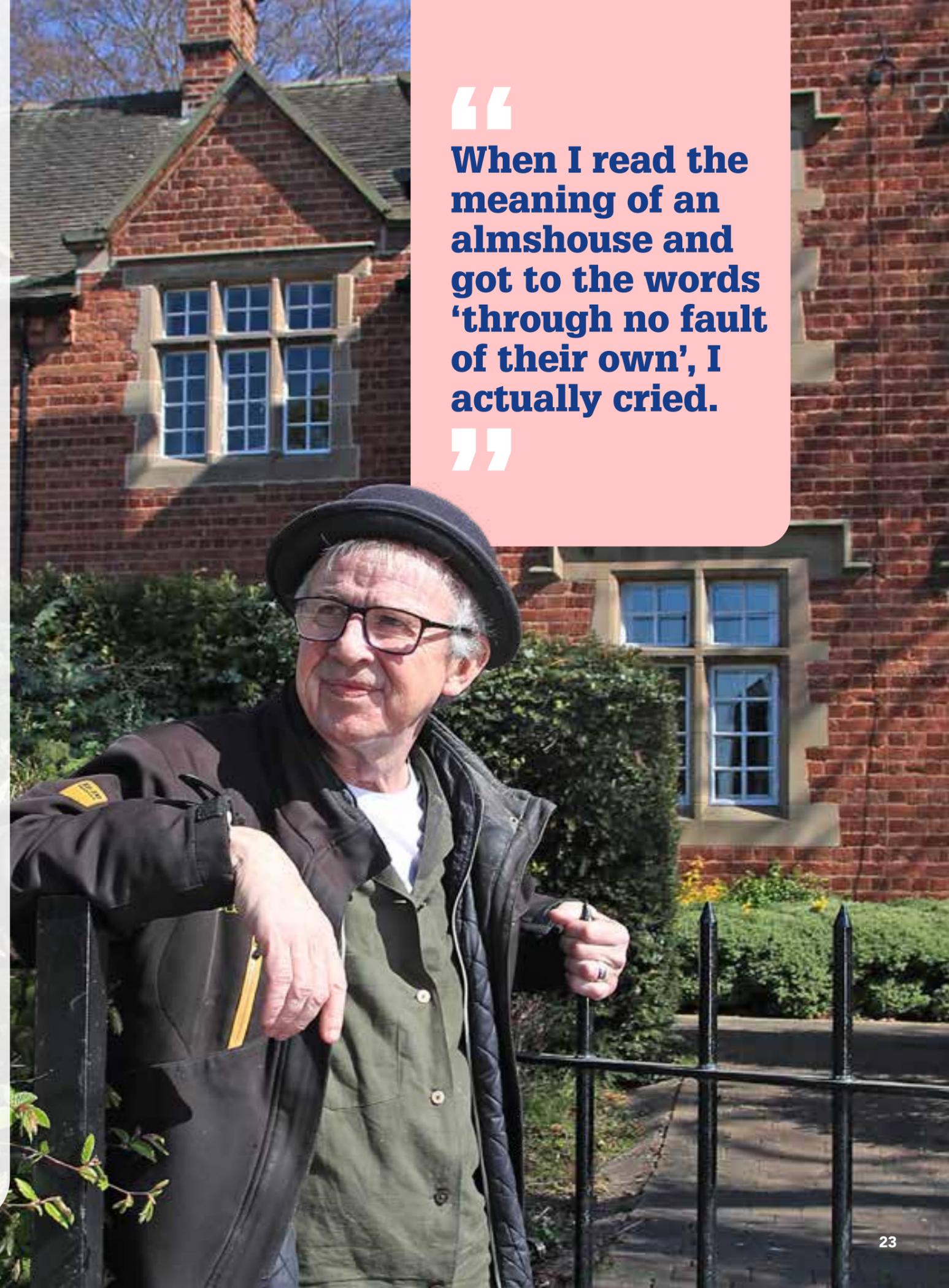
"The support from NCHA has been nothing less than magnificent," he said. "I'm secure, safe, and can concentrate on my studies. Other projects too. It's hard to find the words for how grateful I am."

Ewen's story shows how important it is to have not just a house, but a home. Thanks to the almshouse and to the many people who have helped him, he's starting a promising new chapter.

“

**When I read the meaning of an almshouse and got to the words 'through no fault of their own', I actually cried.**

”



# Letter from Nottingham Forest



**One of our customers, Conner, recently had to spend some time in hospital, but when he returned home, he'd received a lovely letter from Nottingham Forest Football Club!**

26-year-old Conner has been living at our Nuthall Road service for six years, but he's been a huge fan of Nottingham Forest Football Club his whole life, so he was delighted to receive this lovely gesture.

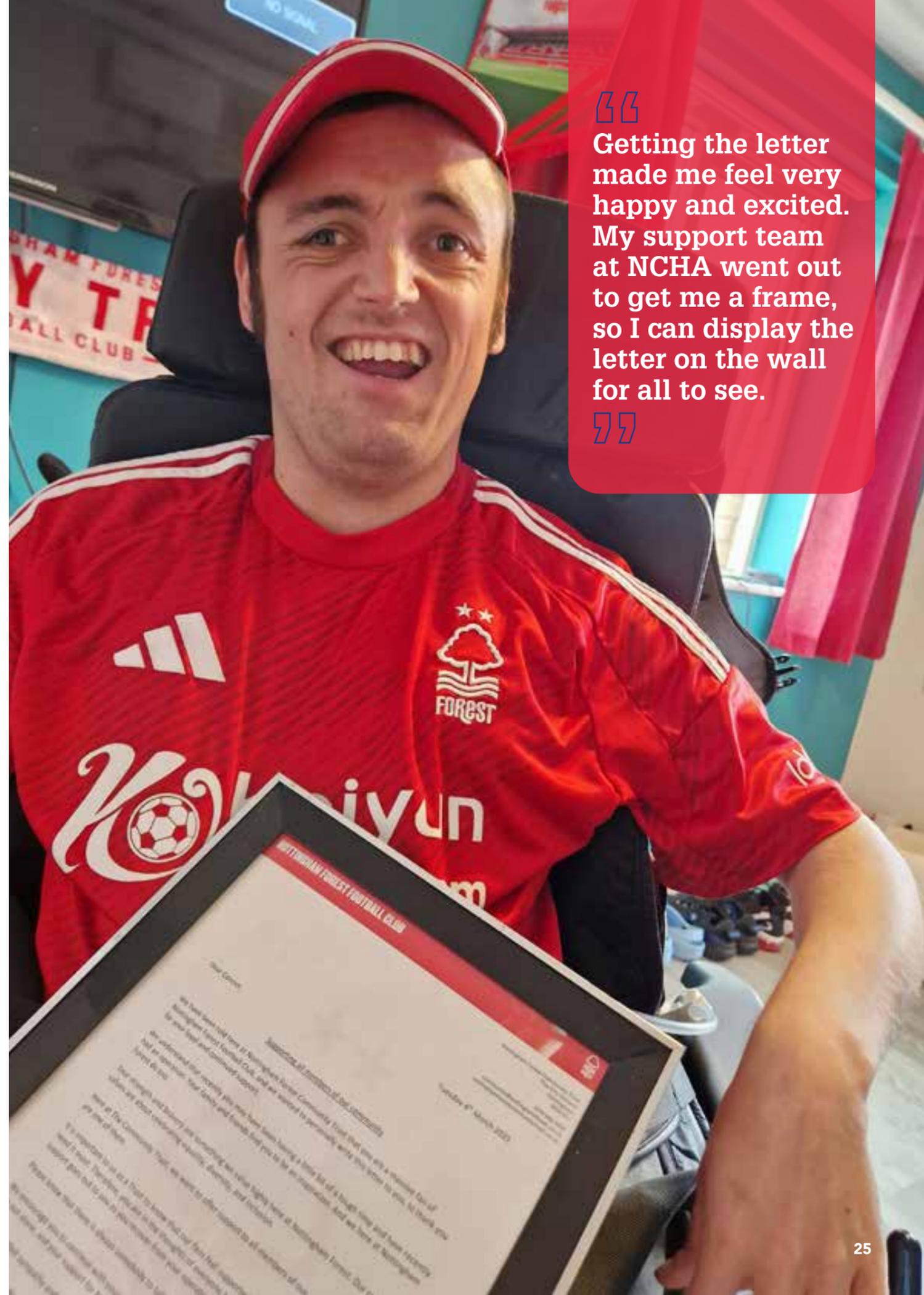
Conner said: 'I had a hip operation and had to stay in hospital for a week. Katherine Cutts, Assistant Manager at Nuthall Road, contacted the Community Forest Group to tell them about my operation and they sent me a letter straight away, wishing me well.'

'The operation all went well, and I even got to watch a Forest match whilst in there. I'm on the mend now.'

'I have so many favourite players I couldn't pick just one! I own around six Nottingham Forest t-shirts! I've been to one game, and I would love to go to more – it's very hard to get tickets.'

'Getting the letter made me feel very happy and excited. My support team at NCHA went out to get me a frame, so I can display the letter on the wall for all to see.'

**Nuthall Road is our supported living service in Cinderhill, Nottingham. It provides accommodation and support for adults with mental health needs, intellectual disabilities and complex needs.**



“ Getting the letter made me feel very happy and excited. My support team at NCHA went out to get me a frame, so I can display the letter on the wall for all to see. ”



# Access **free** online self-help resources

Visit our website to access online self-help tools that will help you:

- Find work / build your career
- Improve your digital skills
- Make your money go further
- Look after your home
- Take care of your wellbeing.

Get extra support at your fingertips, whenever you need it. **These resources are free for NCHA customers!**

Get started by scanning this QR code



## Enrol onto employability training with NCHA

We're pleased to offer new employability support and training opportunities exclusively for NCHA customers.

Delivered through our Community Support team, you can register to complete one of our two training programmes which can help you to boost your career, CV and interview skills.

To find out more, [visit our website](#), or email Chris Ounsworth, Training Programme Coordinator, at: [cstreferrals@ncha.org.uk](mailto:cstreferrals@ncha.org.uk)



## Understanding your service charge

**If you rent your home from NCHA, you might pay a service charge to us. The service charge is your contribution to many of the costs surrounding your home, such as communal services like grounds maintenance and lighting in hallways.**

Your service charge will only cover the cost of services relevant to you. For example, you'll only be charged for lift maintenance if there is a lift at your scheme.

We know service charges can be complicated to understand, so we've developed a new area on our website to explain what the different areas of your service charge cover.



Visit [www.ncha.org.uk/servicecharges](http://www.ncha.org.uk/servicecharges) to find out more.

# Moving to Universal Credit?



Universal Credit (UC) is a benefit for working aged people, designed to make the welfare system simpler. UC is for people who are working, looking for work, or unable to work due to an illness, disability or caring responsibilities. It replaces six existing legacy benefits with one single payment (see the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website for a full list of benefits it's replacing).

When it's your turn to move onto UC, you'll be sent a letter called a 'Migration Notice'.

### Important:

- Don't ignore your Migration Notice letter
- Your legacy benefits will end whether you claim UC or not
- Your notice deadline can be extended.

If you're concerned about your payments to us, speak to your **NCHA Customer Accounts Coordinator on 0800 013 8555** or your **Support Worker** if you have one.

## E-scooters – Top tips from Dave

Did you know your local council's green e-scooters are legal to use on the streets, but it's illegal to use privately owned e-scooters?

David Corry, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Investigator in our Community Safety team, shares some key things to remember:

- Don't be tempted to buy or use private e-scooters as they're illegal and can be a real danger to the rider and others
- It's illegal to use them on pavements, cycle lanes and pedestrian-only areas
- Riding e-scooters in the community can cause a nuisance to neighbours resulting in ASB complaints
- Most e-bikes and e-scooters have lithium-ion batteries which owners charge in their home and can cause a fire risk.



**Dave Corry**  
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Investigator in our Community Safety team



Please make the right choice to keep yourself and our communities safe.

# Improving our repairs service



David Langhorne  
Director of Assets and Property Services

**Last spring was the start of a new era for NCHA as we bought our responsive repairs service in-house. We'd previously been using a contractor to provide our repairs services but unfortunately, they weren't able to deliver the service we needed from them, or that our customers deserved.**

So, on 8 April 2024 we welcomed over **30 new colleagues** to the team to help us improve our service and we're pleased they've had a huge impact.

On an average week we receive reports of between **600 and 800 repair requests.**

Many of these are in our rented homes, but they can be in our care and support services too.

Our in-house repairs team have worked incredibly hard over the last year to complete over **25,000 responsive repairs** in our customers' homes.

Some repairs requests are completed by our Multi-Site Services Officers, some as part of annual servicing, some become part of our planned maintenance cycle and some need specialist contractors. It can be a complex job to manage, and our planning team work hard to coordinate it all and deliver the best service we can for our customers.



Due to the nature of the job market, we're regularly recruiting for new trades operatives to join our team. We also employ new apprentices once a year to gain introduction to a variety of trades. Find out more on our website: [www.ncha.org.uk/jobs](http://www.ncha.org.uk/jobs).

## Meet Charlie, our Electrical Apprentice

Charlie joined NCHA as part of his electrician apprenticeship journey in April 2024.



### This is what Charlie had to say...

I heard about electrician apprenticeships through my family, and it sounded like a great direction to pursue. As an apprentice, I go to college at JTL – a specific college for electricians and plumbers based in Sandiacre – once per week, and work at NCHA the rest of the time.

There are a series of tests I need to pass to qualify as an Electrician. I'm in my second year, and I'm due to finish in 2026.

I love the travel involved with my role – we visit lots of different customer homes across the region. We fix anything electrical that's broken and carry out tests in the homes to ensure they're safe for customers.

I cover a mix of property types, and customers are very welcoming. People want their home fixing to a high standard and they're happy that we're here to help.



From the reactions I've had from customers, many people are finding the repairs experience better now that NCHA are doing everything in-house. We had some lovely feedback from a customer who had been waiting on a job for ages and we got it done well for them, which is great.



**My apprenticeship gives me hands-on, lived experience while learning on the job. I really benefit from being surrounded by lots of electricians.**



I want to stay with NCHA after I fully qualify – I'm comfortable here. If you're considering an apprenticeship with NCHA, I'd say go for it!

Find out more about apprenticeships with NCHA on our website:  
[www.ncha.org.uk/jobs/apprenticeships](http://www.ncha.org.uk/jobs/apprenticeships)



# Make a delicious bread and butter pudding

Bread and butter pudding is a fantastic way to use up old bread to create a delicious, cosy after dinner treat. Our recipe uses standard sliced bread, but you could also use hot cross buns, croissants or panettone.

## Basic ingredients

- 25g/1oz butter, plus extra for greasing
- 8 thick slices white bread
- 350ml/12fl oz full-fat milk
- 50ml/2fl oz double cream
- 2 eggs
- 25g/1oz granulated sugar

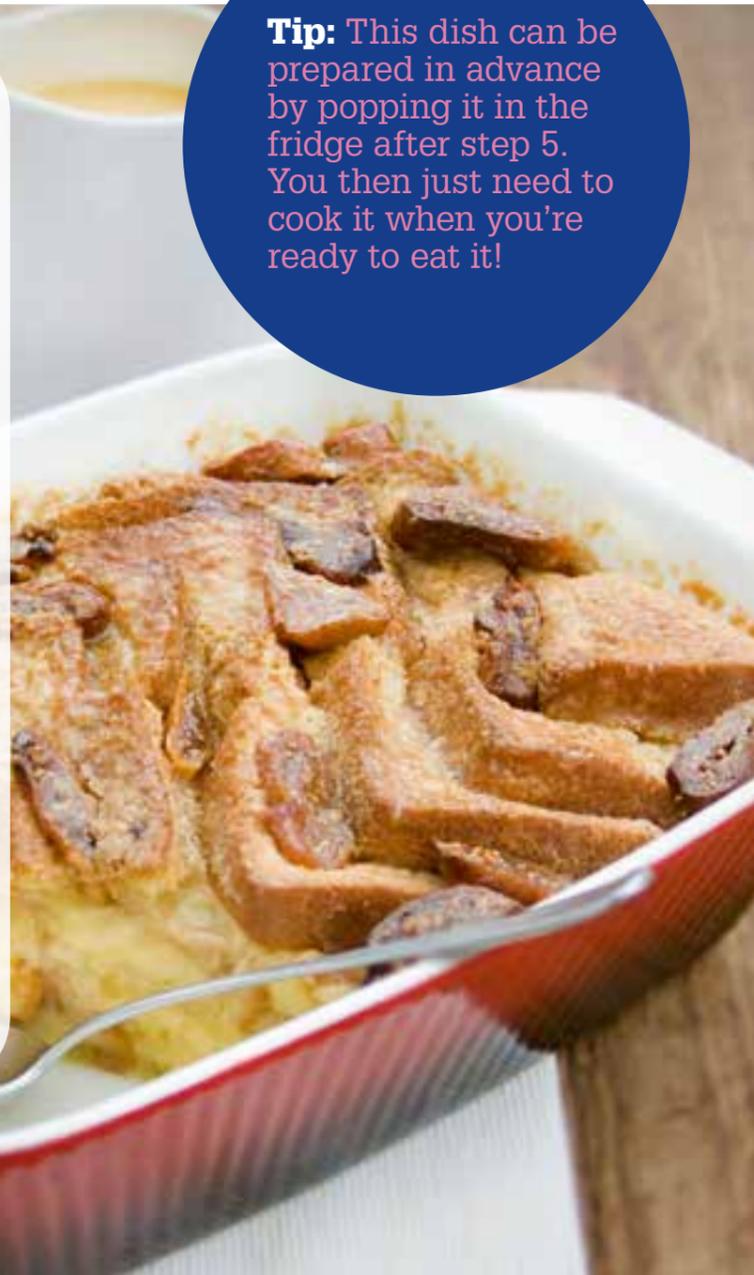
## Optional extras

- 50g/2oz sultanas or chocolate chips
- 2 tsp cinnamon powder
- Nutmeg, grated, to taste
- Custard, ice cream or cream to serve with.

**Tip:** This dish can be prepared in advance by popping it in the fridge after step 5. You then just need to cook it when you're ready to eat it!

## Method

1. Grease an ovenproof dish, about 23x28cm/9x11in in size, with butter. Spread each slice of bread on one side with butter, then cut into triangles.
2. Arrange layers of bread, buttered-side up, in the dish. Add cinnamon and/or sultanas or chocolate chips between layers if desired.
3. Gently warm the milk and cream in a saucepan over a low heat to scalding point. Do not let it boil.
4. Crack the eggs into a bowl, add three-quarters of the sugar and lightly whisk until pale. Add the warm milk and cream mixture and stir well, then strain the custard into a bowl.
5. Pour the custard over the prepared bread layers, sprinkle with nutmeg and the remaining sugar and leave to stand for 30 minutes.
6. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/ Gas 4.
7. Place the dish into the oven and bake for 30–40 minutes, or until the custard has set and the top is golden brown.



# Ensuring our older customers are happy at home

## We're visiting all of our customers aged over 75

At NCHA we value the views of our customers and knowing what we can do to help and support them. As part of this approach, we're visiting all of our customers aged over 75 years old, to see how they are doing and to provide support and advice.

If you're over 75 your Community Coordinator will write to you with a suggested appointment time.

At the visit we discuss all sorts of issues such as:

- Checking on any repairs required
- If any adaptations or changes would make things easier
- Advice on benefits and ensuring people are getting everything they're entitled to
- Advice and information on cost-of-living issues
- Rehousing options
- And anything else that comes up.

## Customer feedback:

Mrs Smith of Sneinton said:



**It was really lovely to have Sharron round for a visit. She took the time to talk to me about some things that had been worrying me. It felt like she really cared. She's given me some ideas for the future too. It's good to feel like I've not been forgotten about.**



# Solve the spring wordsearch

All but one of the below words can be found in this wordsearch grid. Find them all to identify **which one is missing!**

P S M R A B B I T F B A U K  
J A A T A P R I L F L E R Z  
W C E N G R E E N D K T B R  
V B U T T E R F L Y Q I N A  
T O Q B B N S Y B N Q N B I  
S M E O K H Y E U T U A N N  
T P A C I P T S A O T K H Q  
N S P R I N G G O S S R Z M  
X P C R O C U S M Q O X G E  
Y R O B I N P S N A B N R L  
U M B R E L L A J Y I B A T  
Z Q P K W O M I I D C U S P  
Y Y R R A I N B O W T D S S  
K S L Q P B B L O S S O M W

April  
Blossom  
Bud  
Butterfly  
Crocus  
Daffodil  
Grass  
Green  
Melt  
Rabbit  
Rain  
Rainbow  
Robin  
Season  
Spring  
Sun  
Umbrella

To enter you send the missing word to us via email to [communications@ncha.org.uk](mailto:communications@ncha.org.uk).

Don't forget to include your name and address and we will enter you into a prize draw where one lucky winner will receive **£50 in vouchers**.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Missing word:**

**The deadline for competition entries is Monday 30 June 2025 – good luck!**

**Privacy notice:** Contact details will be safely stored for the purposes of the competition only, and will be destroyed once the winner of the competition has been notified.