

# People**FIRST**

The magazine for the residents of Pickering and Ferens Homes



**All about  
communication**

7



**New community  
allotment**

8



**Keeping  
your home  
safe**

9





## Welcome from Claire



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of People First! I hope that you enjoyed the festive period and managed to enjoy some of our many activities and events, we have had wonderful feedback from these so thank you to everyone who took part.

You will see in this edition how we have been listening to your feedback and using it to keep shaping and improving our services, your input is welcomed and invaluable to us, please do contact us if you would like to be more involved with us.

I would also like to welcome our new Independent Board Members,

Catherine Kelly, John Glenton and Andy Micklethwaite, our new Resident Board Members John Holmes and Valerie Crowhurst, and our Council Nominated Board Member, Cheryl Payne. Having a strong Board which includes residents is key to ensuring we are performing well, managing our finances well and that we have plans in place to keep delivering excellent services to you, our residents.

*Claire*



## What's been happening in the community?



There has been lots happening! From Older Persons Week celebrations to day trips, coffees in the gardens through to Fetes and Tai Chi.

We would love to see you at some events, you don't have to worry about coming on your own – lots of people do and it's a great way to meet new people, have fun and even learn some new skills.



Keep up to date with events on our website



## Volunteer **with us**

We are looking for new resident and non-resident volunteers to work with us.

**This is a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills, make new friends and spend some time each month helping other people.**

- You'll receive training for your volunteer role, as well as being offered additional courses such as Safeguarding Awareness and more!
- You'll always be supported by an allocated volunteer lead.
- You'll have opportunities within a range of services such as coffee mornings, social groups, craft classes, music sessions, health and well-being, Christmas parties...and many more.
- You can volunteer as much or as little time as possible, but we'd recommend a minimum of 1 hour per week.

## Welcome Aboard!

John and Valerie both joined the Board of Directors in July 2023. They have both been PFH residents for over 5 years and bring with them a wealth of experience. Both John and Valerie have been involved in reviews of PFH services through their Resident Led Scrutiny Panel membership and are members of our Residents Committee. We are delighted to have them on Board!



## Neighbourhood Walkabouts



**Please find all the neighbourhood walkabouts due to take part in 2024 enclosed with this edition, make sure you note when yours is so you can join us.**

You don't need to wait until the walkabout to report routine repairs to us though, this can be done more efficiently by contacting our Customer Services Team on **01482 223 783**, [info@pfh.org.uk](mailto:info@pfh.org.uk) or online at [www.pfh.org.uk/resident-zone/report-a-repair](http://www.pfh.org.uk/resident-zone/report-a-repair).

If you are unable to attend the walkabout but wish to give your feedback, please don't hesitate in contacting us with any concerns you may have, or you can request a knock on the door on the day and we'll pop and see you.

# How we are performing

as at end of September

**0.35%** of properties are vacant and available to let

**0.016%** Rent arrears written off as a percentage of rent due

**99.8%** of emergency repairs completed in target time

**99.8%** of routine repairs completed in target time

**100%** of complaints responded to within target time

**46** Average relet time for ALL vacant properties in calendar days

**0.58%** Current resident arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit

## Complaints and Compliments

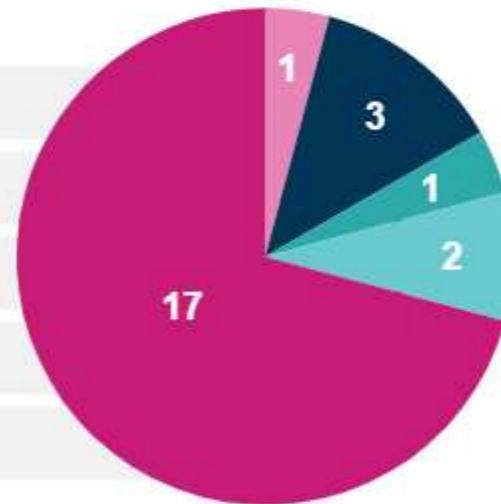
Between April and September 2023, we acknowledged **26 complaints** within timescales and **investigated 100% of complaints** within timescales.

**Complaints Stage 1**  
**23 complaints received**

**Complaints Stage 2**  
**3 complaints received**

Complaints were about

- 1 Breakdown in Communication
- 3 Damage
- 1 Delays
- 2 Inaccurate Information
- 17 Quality of Service



Our complaints performance was discussed at the 'Learning from Feedback Forum' recently and residents also reviewed complaint case studies, the learning tracker and heard about the upcoming changes to the Complaint Handling Code.

## Its all about the communication!

The Resident Scrutiny Group completed a review of Communication in April 2023. They produced 17 recommendations that the teams have been busy working on since the report received Board approval in May 2023.

**The recommendations will be carefully monitored, here are a few highlights from the report and our commitment to delivering them.**

- ✓ We will ensure consistent written and verbal communication principles with a staff guide which was launched in October.
- ✓ Our employee inductions will be updated to include spending time with residents so staff have a better feel for how you access and find services.
- ✓ We have developed a suite of 'Resident Personas' to be able to understand our resident base. We have shared these with our staff.
- ✓ We will be aligning our staff Code of Conduct with the Resident Code of Respect and a project group has been set up.
- ✓ We will use feedback to revise the Rent Statement layout so that it is clear and easier to understand.



### Would you like to be involved in a future review?

As the group prepare to start their next review, we would love to hear from you! Please contact us on **01482 223 783**.

## Be part of our Resident Committee

Work with us to co-create our services, solve problems, and use your own experience as a resident to help us to keep delivering, and improving our services.

The group meet four times a year to hear updates on our progress and ambitions and this year have been invaluable in reviewing our Consumer Standard Self-Assessment and in approving our new Hate Crime Policy.

We currently have 3 vacancies and would be particularly interested in hearing from residents in East Riding, West Hull and North Hull – please contact us on **01482 223 783** to find out more.



## You Said, We Did!

Your feedback continues to help us develop our services – some highlights include;

- ✓ We arranged for a local solicitor to deliver a workshop to help with writing wills.
- ✓ Scam awareness sessions delivered by the Humberside Police fraud team.
- ✓ New line dancing classes delivered at Broadway.
- ✓ Tai Chi classes have been delivered as a trial (we will be exploring continuing these)
- ✓ Developing a community allotment
- ✓ New 'Bystander First Aid' courses have been arranged.



**If you have any suggestions, please call us on 01482 223 783**

## Outco and a legacy for the future

Outco are the grounds maintenance contractor who have been delivering grounds maintenance for us over the past two years, helping keep our green areas tidy for everyone to enjoy. As part of our contract with them, Outco contribute to local community initiatives and have recently been working with us to reinstate the Broadway Manor allotment. This involved sending along a hard working team and materials to build several new raised beds for residents to use to grow flowers, plants and vegetables. The allotment makes a great new communal area, and we are looking forward to seeing it bloom.



## Damp, Mould, and Condensation

Whilst we believe we've got good systems in place to help ensure none of our properties suffer from damp, mould, or condensation issues, we can only do something if we've been made aware.

If you suspect a serious cause of damp, please let us know straight away by calling **01482 223783** or emailing **info@pfh.org.uk**

There are some ways in which you can prevent condensation in your home.

### Reduce Steam and Moisture

- ✓ Cover your pans when cooking
- ✓ Make sure your tumble dryer is vented
- ✓ Open windows when drying clothes indoors
- ✓ Heat your home
- ✓ Keep space between your furniture and the radiators
- ✓ Never use portable gas heaters

### Ventilate your home

- ✓ Allow fresh air into your home
- ✓ Open your bedroom window for 15 minutes each day
- ✓ Open the bathroom window after a bath or shower or use the extractor fan
- ✓ Close the kitchen door when cooking and open the window or use the extractor fan

### Extractor fans

- ✓ Always use the fans when cooking or bathing
- ✓ When using the fan keep the windows in the room closed
- ✓ Keep fans free from obstruction
- ✓ Some fans operate automatically to manage moisture in the air – please do not turn these off at the power switch



# WMC (Rent) & Service Charges

In March this year you will receive a letter from us, advising you of the upcoming WMC (rent) increase and service charges. WMC stands for 'Weekly Maintenance Contributions', which as we are an Almshouse Charity is the term used to reflect your status as a resident, rather than a tenant.

Following the letters, we understand you may want to speak to us and ask any questions you may have, our phone lines will be very busy and to save you time we will be letting you know in advance of all your payment dates for 2024 if you pay by direct debit.

## If you pay on the 1st of the month

|               |               |               |               |               |                |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 2nd<br>Apr 24 | 1st<br>May 24 | 3rd<br>Jun 24 | 1st<br>Jul 24 | 1st<br>Aug 24 | 2nd<br>Sept 24 |
| 1st<br>Oct 24 | 1st<br>Nov 24 | 2nd<br>Dec 24 | 3rd<br>Jan 25 | 3rd<br>Feb 25 | 3rd<br>Mar 25  |

## If you pay on the 15th of the month

|                |                |                |                |                |                 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 15th<br>Apr 24 | 15th<br>May 24 | 17th<br>Jun 24 | 15th<br>Jul 24 | 15th<br>Aug 24 | 16th<br>Sept 24 |
| 15th<br>Oct 24 | 15th<br>Nov 24 | 16th<br>Dec 24 | 15th<br>Jan 25 | 17th<br>Feb 25 | 17th<br>Mar 25  |

You can see service charges at [www.pfh.org.uk/resident-zone/policies](http://www.pfh.org.uk/resident-zone/policies) or call us for a copy.

**If you pay your Direct Debit Calendar monthly, the amount you will pay is worked out as follows:**

**Your weekly rent amount is multiplied by 52 weeks of the year divided by 12 months.**

For example, if your rent is £106.50 per week x 52 weeks of the year divided by 12 months = £461.50 per calendar month



It is important to keep your rent account in credit, and we can help if you have any concerns about paying your rent – or with the general increase in the cost of living.



Our dedicated team include Jo and Max who are here to support you with claiming benefits, budgeting and anything that can help with managing your finances, please get in touch with them by calling **01482 223 783**.

Helen was struggling to maintain her rent payments, causing anxiety. Jo visited Helen, to help with a financial assessment. This showed that Helen was entitled to claim Housing Benefit, a Council Tax reduction and pension credit.

Jo submitted the claim online with Helen which meant the process was handles as quickly as possible. The claim meant that the arrears on the rent account of £800 were able to be cleared, and the resident felt much happier with their financial situation.

\*We have used a real scenario but changed the resident's name to ensure confidentiality.



**We are here to help.**

# Keeping Active

In the gloomy weather it is more important than ever to keep active and get some fresh air. Stuck for ideas? How about....



**Join a walking group**



**Take up swimming**



**Try a new exercise class**



**Try some home workouts**

Exercise the mind too - keeping your brain fit is just as important as the body. Stimulating your mind will improve your memory, your mood, and your health.

Come along to one of our many events and activities which can be found on our website.



[www.pfh.org.uk](http://www.pfh.org.uk)

## Helping the planet

You could help with cost savings of around £4,000 per edition, and reduce our environmental impact by signing up to receive People First by email here:



Scan the QR code to update your preferences



# Air Fryer Fans!

We hear from lots of residents about how they are using energy efficient air fryers at home to save costs with gas and electricity from having the full oven on. We definitely have some talented cooks, and we would love to share a 'Air Fryer Favourite' every month with you, please send your favourite recipes with photos if you can to [info@pfh.org.uk](mailto:info@pfh.org.uk) or message us on our Facebook or Twitter!

## Chicken & Veggies

Thank you for sharing your favourite recipes with us – particularly to Sheila who says that this healthy chicken and veg dinner is one you will make time and again.



### Ingredients

- 2-3 chicken breasts chopped into chunks
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 chopped courgette
- 1 chopped bell pepper
- 1/2 chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp each garlic powder, chili powder, salt, pepper
- 1 tbsp Italian seasoning

### Method

Preheat air fryer to 400F.

Chop the veggies and chicken into small bite-size pieces and transfer to a large mixing bowl.

Add the oil and seasoning to the bowl and toss to combine.

Add the chicken and veggies to the preheated air fryer and cook for 10 minutes, shaking halfway, or until the chicken and veggies are charred and chicken is cooked through. If your air fryer is small, you may have to cook them in 2-3 batches.

### Are you wanting to eat well on a budget?

Then let us know and we can invite you to join the healthy eating on a budget courses with the chance to receive an air fryer after the course.



## Time for a makeover



As part of our commitment to investing in our properties, we have been busy over at Rosedale Grove and Staveley Road, both preparing to, and installing new kitchens. Residents have chosen their colour scheme, and where possible the new layouts too.

## Charging Batteries Safely

If you have a mobility scooter or E-scooter, it is important that you only use the approved plug from the manufacturer to charge it to reduce any fire risks.

- ✓ Unplug chargers overnight.
- ✓ Unplug chargers when you are out of the property.
- ✓ Don't charge E-scooters inside the property.

Please contact us for guidance with how to safely store and charge your scooter **01482 223 783**.



## Tips to save energy in your home!

We've brought together a few energy saving tips to help you to cut down on your energy bills.



Think about replacing traditional light bulbs with LED bulbs because this will save you money.



Defrost your freezer every 6 months – this will ensure it runs efficiently.



Run the washing machine at a lower temperature – you can often do everyday washes at 30°C. Washing clothes at 30°C uses around 40% less electricity over a year than washing at higher temperatures.



Keep radiators and heaters clear so warm air can circulate – for example, by drawing your curtains and tucking them behind radiators.

## Could you be an Eco Champion?



We are looking for bungalow residents who are passionate about the environment and in making the best use of energy to join us! We want to plan, and make sure we have the best and most effective heating systems in our properties and need like-minded people to support us on a journey to a greener future, you could be testing Infra red Heating, or new air source pumps and sharing your feedback. Please contact us if you would like to make a difference for the planet too!

- ✉ email [info@pfh.org.uk](mailto:info@pfh.org.uk)
- ☎ or call 01482 223 783





# Garden jobs to prepare for Spring!

It's time to get digging, feeding, mulching, and pruning! Having some time outdoors is great for your physical and mental health and some hard work now will show in the Spring! Towards the end of February, you could mow your lawn, get your borders prepared and ready and start to sow your geraniums and petunias for a glorious display in the Spring.



**We love to see your gardens, tubs, and baskets – please send us your photos to our Facebook page!**

# Tree for Life

Our green spaces, heritage and communities are all so important to us, and our customers.

We recently lost a diseased and dangerous Ash tree from the front grounds of Pickering Crescent. The original tree is believed to have been planted when this particular row of Grade II listed bungalows were built circa 1919.



Given the listed status of the bungalows and the fact that it left a huge gap within the grounds of Pickering Crescent, we felt that it was only right to replace the tree with a like-for-like replacement.

It's not often we plant new tree's, so to honour this new addition, we have spoken with local residents and dedicated the tree to the friends, neighbours and loved ones that have passed away - we now have a 'Tree for Life'.

# Do you have Home Contents Insurance?



**As your landlord, we insure the property you live in, but not what is inside it.**

Having home contents insurance protects your belongings should you have a disaster or accident. There are lots available on the market and it is wise to shop around, and to read the small print too.

- Money Supermarket**  
[www.moneysupermarket.com](http://www.moneysupermarket.com)
- Compare The Market**  
[www.comparethemarket.com](http://www.comparethemarket.com)
- AgeCo by Age UK**  
[www.ageco.co.uk](http://www.ageco.co.uk)
- My Home Contents Insurance, as recommended by the National Housing Federation**  
[www.thistlemyhome.co.uk](http://www.thistlemyhome.co.uk)

# Fire Doors Save Lives

Flat front doors are designated as fire doors and ensure the safety and well-being of our residents and the protection of their homes in the event of a fire. Modifications to fire doors will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and in strict adherence to UK fire regulations and legal tolerances. Please ensure you check with PFH before purchasing any carpets and underlays in your hallways as the thickness of the floor coverings can impact upon the performance of the fire door.



## Reporting Repairs

If you need to report an emergency repair (such as unlawful entry, serious leaks to pipes, vandalism that causes a security threat to your home) you should call us on **01482 223 783** to speak to us urgently. If you call us within office hours, you'll be able to speak to a member of the Customer Service team. If you call us outside of office hours, your call will be diverted to an out of hours service for emergency repairs only.



You can also report a repair on our website too [www.pfh.org.uk](http://www.pfh.org.uk)

## Meet Claire, Customer Services Officer

"I have worked at PFH almost 2 years now, and really enjoy my job here! It is extremely varied, one minute I can be raising a repair and the next I can be discussing birthday plans with a resident who's celebrating a milestone birthday. Helping residents with their enquiries and providing the best service possible is a key part of my role – and I am lucky to work with a fantastic team who make the day fun and the office a great place to be."



## It's a little bit puzzling

Try our 'New Year' word search whilst you are having a brew!



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

Words are hidden → ↓ ↘

|          |             |            |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| Active   | Goals       | Positive   |
| Activity | Healthy     | Reset      |
| Energy   | Kindness    | Resolution |
| Events   | Lifestyle   | Savings    |
| Fit      | Motivation  | Well       |
| Fresh    | Movement    |            |
| Friends  | Opportunity |            |





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PICKERING & FERENS HOMES