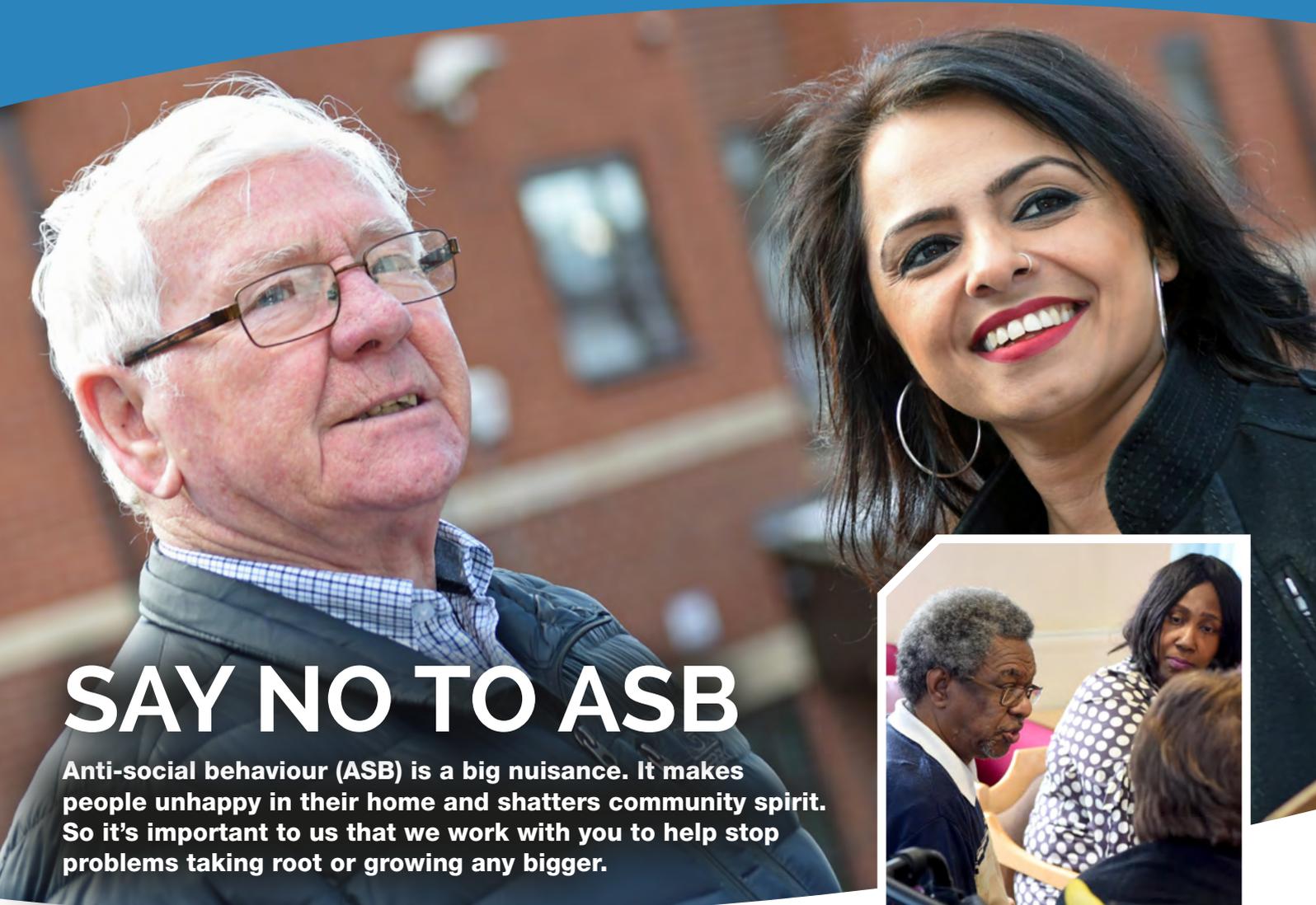
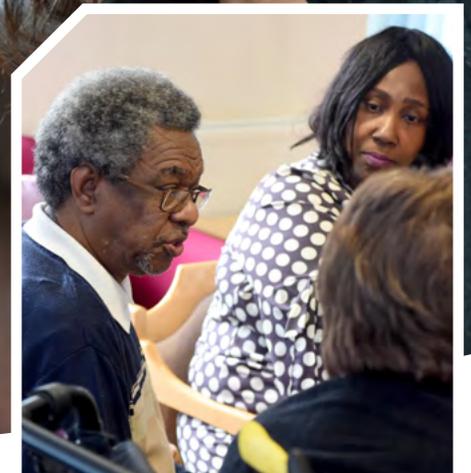


# UNDER ONE ROOF



## SAY NO TO ASB

**Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a big nuisance. It makes people unhappy in their home and shatters community spirit. So it's important to us that we work with you to help stop problems taking root or growing any bigger.**



Everyone has the right to enjoy their home in peace, so be considerate and tolerant towards your neighbours. Remember you are breaking your tenancy agreement if you or your visitors behave in a way that harms other people's quality of life, such as by causing noise, alarm or harassment.

When having an issue with a neighbour, talk to them calmly and politely. We do not expect to get involved in less serious problems, such as disagreements over parking, unless you have tried to sort it out first. If we get involved very early on it may make the situation worse.

If you're unable to straighten things out we can help you resolve the dispute in a positive way, such as having an

independent mediator talk to you both.

You should speak to us promptly if the problem is more serious or you feel unsafe. And if a crime is committed, you should report it straightaway to the police.

We won't shy away from taking legal action. But it's the last step we can take after all other reasonable measures have been tried and there is enough evidence of the ASB to prove it in court.

"If you're affected by ASB, we will do all we can to support you," says our housing services manager Pamela Farquharson. "Working together brings the best solutions, so please help us to help you by collecting details about the nuisance and keeping in touch."

### SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR FEEDBACK

**78% of cases handled within target response times**

**82% of cases successfully resolved**

**67% satisfaction with our handling of the case**

Still problems going on? Let us know by calling our Housing Team on **0121 358 0966**

\*For cases of anti-social behaviour between April to December 2017



## SAYING IT WITH FLOWERS

**Our customer scrutiny panel is the opportunity for residents to get together with other people to share ideas and influence how we perform as a landlord.**

Panel members do fantastic work to investigate the housing services they select to put under the spotlight and to recommend improvements. Most recently this has included linking up with residents from two other local housing providers to look at how anti-social behaviour is handled.

So we thought it only fitting that we brought everyone together to show our appreciation with a ‘thank you’ presentation for all the work done to review our services.

“It was a lovely occasion,” says Mary Brannac from Wolverhampton (pictured opposite, on left). “Being part of the scrutiny panel feels quite empowering. It’s interesting to find out how things are done and to talk to staff and other residents to form our views on the ways to further improve. It’s good to have a say.”

We’re currently looking at how to make our scrutiny panel more flexible and easier for you to get involved. If you’re interested in taking part and finding out more, please speak to your housing officer or get in touch with any member of our team on **0121 358 0966**.



## HOUSE SWAP

**Sometimes your home becomes unsuitable for what you need or can afford. You need something smaller or in a different location perhaps.**

Mutual exchange is a swap of properties between two or more tenants. It can offer a quick way to move and puts you in charge, as you are responsible for finding someone to swap your home with. This can be either a tenant of ours, another housing association or a council tenant.

Once you have found a match, you will need our written permission before the move. We’ll usually agree to the exchange as long as you do not have rent arrears, you repair any damage to your home and if another landlord is involved, that they’ve agreed to it too.

Sharon McKen (pictured) from Erdington in Birmingham had a great experience of moving to a Nehemiah property through mutual exchange.

“I needed a home for myself and my daughter that was more wheelchair accessible than where we were living,” she recalls. “It took just a couple of months to find something suitable through a website called HomeSwapper. I was then surprised at how quick the swap process was. From the time my new housing officer Rakpinder got involved, it was all completed in about 6 weeks.”

Mutual exchange is the best way to move, as property vacancies are rare and we can only help you transfer through a ‘management move’ in exceptional circumstances. Your housing officer can give you more advice.





# INSPIRING GOALS

**Finding the right career path as a youngster can be difficult – especially when you don’t know the many options open to you.**

So we were pleased to be involved in an Employability event for young black people in Wolverhampton, organised by Reach Society and Wesleyan Holiness Church. Over 200 talented teenagers met employers and local role models to be encouraged and inspired in their career choices. They included our chief executive

Llewellyn Graham, who is pictured above right along with some of the many other professionals who gave their support. Sandra Blake, a volunteer at our Vine Square scheme who has just become a permanent staff member with us, encouraged her son to attend the Employability event.

“He found it really inspiring that the community had come together to help the next generation,” says Sandra. “As he’s interested in studying law, he found it particularly useful to speak to lawyers there about their work and experience.”

# SPRINGBOARD TO SUCCESS

**We’re saying a bittersweet farewell to our housing trainee Simone Flowers (pictured below), who after her two years with us is moving on to the next stage of her successful housing career.**



“I’m sad to say goodbye to the fantastic people I’ve met at Nehemiah,” says Simone. “But I leave knowing that I’ve gained so many skills. By working in a small housing association you get hands-on experience in a whole range of housing services to discover where your strengths and interests lie. It’s been brilliant.”  
After studying journalism at university, Simone’s route into housing began after she was made redundant and looking for new work ideas.  
“At the time I lived in a Nehemiah property and noticed that the work of my housing officer looked interesting,” she remembers.

“So I enrolled on some housing courses while also working part-time. I then got my first housing job in customer services. Unfortunately the housing association relocated but I knew it was what I wanted to do, so when I got the trainee position with Nehemiah I was over the moon!”  
We’re sure many of you who know Simone will join us in wishing her the very best in her new housing job with Family Optima and in her bright future ahead.  
You can read about Simone’s trainee experience with us in her blog.

[Click here](#) **Diary of a Housing Trainee**



## HOUSING GREEN BUDS

It may look a bit barren now but this greenhouse at Henry Court in Dudley will soon be bursting with a tasty crop of fruit and vegetables.

The greenhouse was installed last August for any green-fingered residents at the scheme to use.

Resident and volunteer gardener Lancelot Lewis (pictured) dug in straightaway to harvest a colourful range of produce including onions, pumpkins, sweetcorn and strawberries. These were shared amongst the residents and used in meals in the communal dining room.

Melt away winter wonderland; we're ready for spring!

## SAFETY REGISTER

Faulty appliances, such as washing machines, tumble dryers and fridge freezers, cause over 60 house fires a week in the UK.

Registering your appliance makes it possible for the manufacturer to easily get in touch with you if it turns out that the item is faulty or dangerous.

You can do this for new appliances and even old ones you've had for a few years or acquired second hand.

To check if a specific electrical item has been recalled and to register your appliances for free, visit the Electrical Safety First website.



[Click here](#) Electrical Safety First website

## UC Universal Credit NEWS

Universal Credit (UC) is the single, monthly benefit to working age people who are out of work or on a low income.

It now applies in Birmingham and Wolverhampton and will soon be rolled out to other areas where we have properties, coming to Coventry in July, Walsall in October and Sandwell in November.

If you live in these places and make a new claim it will be for UC rather than for the tax credits and benefits it replaces (including Housing Benefit). You will also need to apply for UC if certain changes in your circumstances affect your existing claim.

There used to be a wait of up to six weeks to get your first UC payment. But the wait has now been cut so payments are received five weeks after the day you claim.

From April, if you received Housing Benefit and move onto UC you will continue to have your rent paid for two weeks during the wait for your first payment.

If you're struggling while waiting for your first payment you can request an advance payment from your work coach. You will have to repay the advance from your future UC payments, so only ask for what you need.

Please remember that to be ready for UC overall, you must:

- Be sure you can get online – as you have to make a claim and manage your account online
- Have an account with a bank, building society or credit union – as this is how payments are made to you
- Budget carefully – if your rent was previously paid to us, you will now need to arrange to pay it yourself. The easiest way to do this is by Direct Debit.

Contact your local Job Centre Plus for more advice or call the UC Helpline for free on **0800 328 9344**. You can also talk to your housing officer.

[Click here](#) Universal Credit government website