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Competition on page 19



Futures in focus

Edition three, 2026



@futureshousing



Futures Housing Group



www.futureshg.co.uk



0300 456 2531

Welcome to your latest edition of Futures in Focus

Have you ever come along to one of our estate walkabouts?

Our communities housing officers would love more customers to join them, so we've included all the estate walkabouts happening over the next three months on pages 12 and 13 of this magazine.

We've also got an update on the survey in the last magazine asking 'customers' how they'd like to be referred to, as well as important updates about how and why we prioritise repairs in your home.

If you have an idea for a story you'd like us to cover in a future magazine, or maybe you have something interesting to share, then please email communications@futureshg.co.uk so we can help.



Stand-up Sharon

Futures' resident comedian is here and back with new jokes. Remember, hecklers are allowed.

Email communications@futureshg.co.uk with your best (family friendly) jokes and join Sharon in our next magazine.

"Every morning I take my partner tea in their pyjamas. They love it, but the pyjamas are getting a bit soggy."

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Want the latest breaking Futures news? ▼

Follow us on social media to get regular news and updates. We're on Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, plus our own online community My Voice. ([futureshg.info/join-MyVoice](https://www.futureshg.info/join-MyVoice)).



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'Futures in the community' news

Supporting foodbanks

We've made donations to eight foodbanks this winter to help local families and households.

Winter is a demanding time for foodbanks with the added pressure of Christmas and colder weather on people's pockets, so we worked with our Tenancy Support team to see how we could best help.

The team often refers customers to foodbanks, so we reviewed which ones the team uses most to ensure the donations were likely to reach our customers, as well as the wider community.

We made a payment of £250 to each foodbank, which was possible thanks to a donation we received from Efficiency East Midlands (EEM) to spend on our communities.



The foodbanks we've donated to are:

- South Normanton Area Foodbank (Trussell Trust)
- Salcare, Heanor
- St Andrew's Church foodbank, Langley Mill
- Oscari, Riddings
- Hope for Belper
- Salvation Army, Ripley
- Daventry Foodbank (Southbrook)
- Restore Northampton

Some of these foodbanks are the only ones in the area and are relied upon by many. Research by the Trussell Trust shows the average foodbank bag costs between £40 and £100, so it's lovely to know we've been able to give something back. As a not-for-profit housing association, donations and funding are so important to help us achieve our goals of giving back to the community, so we're very thankful for EEM's generosity.

Janene Haywood, Community Engagement Project Delivery Officer at Futures



Swapping the office for the outdoors



We helped transform a community garden close to one of our new affordable housing developments in Derbyshire last year.

Along with construction company Lovell Partnerships, 25 colleagues stepped away from their day jobs to pick up paintbrushes and wheel wood chippings at Long Eaton Community Garden, near to our 109 home development on Bennett Street, Long Eaton.

Investing in local communities is an essential part of any new build development so we wanted to support the volunteer-run project after a visit showed us how the incredible space was benefitting the community.

As well as volunteer gardening sessions, the group runs activities for home schooled children and young people with special educational needs, art therapy groups, grief and mental health support and lots more events, activities and groups.



The whole day was so well organised and co-ordinated and the results are just stunning. We won the Green Flag community award early in 2025 and the work Futures and Lovell have done is so important towards helping us maintain that status. It's been fantastic to see people here enjoying the garden as much as we do and it's made such a difference. It looks amazing and we are immensely grateful.

Lynn Hodgkins, volunteer at the group.

Improvements delivered as part of the day included a fresh lick of paint to a Portakabin and laying 15 tonnes of wood chippings for paths and seating areas, including a space used as a forest school. We also brought along our grounds maintenance team and joiners to create chainsaw wood carvings for the children who use the forest school to enjoy.

Join us!

If you live near Duffield in Derbyshire, there's a community group that meets once a fortnight at one of our community centres.

The group holds a raffle and bingo session at Ecclesbourne community centre every other Friday. As well as these activities, you can also just sit and enjoy a cuppa, chat and biscuits! If you'd like to join them, then you're welcome to pop along as the group would love for more people to come along.



Ecclesbourne community centre,
Ecclesbourne Close,
Duffield, Derbyshire, DE56 4GJ.



1:30pm – 3pm, Friday 13 March, Friday 27 March and every other Friday from then on.

If you use one of our community centres to run a free group and would like more people to take part, email communications@futureshg.co.uk so we can share your story in a future magazine.

What should we call you?

In our last magazine, we ran a survey to find out whether you're happy to be known as **'customers'** or whether you'd prefer an alternative.

We want to make sure we're taking your preferences into account when we communicate with you, and using language that's clear and makes sense. We didn't get a definitive winner in our survey, but what is clear is that many of you would prefer us to use straightforward language like **'tenant'** or **'resident'** when appropriate.

With that in mind, we're going to become more flexible with our language, and use **'tenant'** and **'resident'** alongside customer, depending on the context.

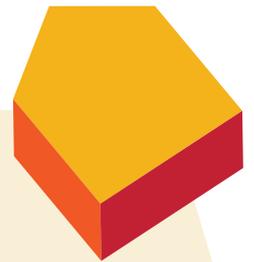


We appreciate all the responses to our survey, and we'll keep exploring topics like this as part of the customer influence and involvement work we told you about in our last magazine.

Keep an eye on our social media channels for more information about how you can get involved and influence the future of Futures!

Chat with our Chief Exec

Tim Mulvenna, Chief Executive at Futures, will be hosting an online video call on My Voice on Wednesday 25 March.



He'll be discussing our plans for the next few years, as well as answering your questions.

We can't set out our goals and priorities without speaking to customers, so along with the survey included in the same envelope as this magazine, there's also a chance to chat this through with the 'top man'.

You must be a My Voice member to take part in the call as the meeting invite and further details will be given on there. You can still take part if you don't have a question to ask, and you don't need to have your camera on if you'd prefer not to, but Tim would love for lots of customers to come and say hello.

If you'd like to join, make sure you're signed up for My Voice by going to futureshg.info/join-MyVoice.

Mice, rats and squirrels – oh my!

Help prevent unwanted houseguests from entering your home.

When the weather turns colder mice, rats and other rodents often seek warmth, food and shelter by moving indoors. They're particularly attracted to food and they can cause a real issue in the home – as well as being unpleasant and unwanted houseguests! Check out our top tips below to find out how to give yourself the best chance of avoiding furry pests.



Clear up any food waste quickly and keep counters free of crumbs and debris. Put a lid on the bin, and regularly wash it out with hot, soapy water or a disinfectant spray.



Lift up pet food bowls from the floor when your four legged friends have finished eating, and wash them promptly.



Let us know about any possible rodent entry points to your home, including gaps around pipes or windows.



If you have a garden, avoid leaving food on the ground (including bird seed, fat balls and bread) and cover any compost heaps with wire mesh.



Keep bins away from windows and doors, as they can give rats and mice a boost to access areas that they might otherwise not be able to reach.



Move things around – rats have a fear of new things, so changing their environment can be a helpful deterrent.

Some people also find it helpful to soak balls of cotton wool in peppermint oil and place them on windowsills or in the kitchen, as the smell can deter rodents. However, if you have other pets in the home this may not be suitable as it can make them ill. Get advice from your vet if you're not sure.

If you have any signs of rodents in your home, like droppings, chewed or frayed wires, or if you or your family spot them, report this to us as soon as possible.

You can also visit our Help Hub for more advice on deterring pests from your home: [futureshg.info/dealing-with-pests](https://www.futureshg.info/dealing-with-pests).



Stand-up Sharon

"I've got a new pen that can write under water. It can write other words too."

Awaab's Law update

In the last issue of Futures in Focus we told you about a new law, Awaab's Law, which was changing how housing associations and other social landlords have to deal with some types of home emergencies, including problems with damp and mould. The law came into effect at the end of October so how have things changed for Futures and, more importantly, our customers?

Let's start with a quick overview of how we now work differently.

Thanks to the new law we have to:



Investigate reports of a potential damp and mould hazard within ten working days.



Give the customer a written summary of our findings within three working days of completing the investigation.



If we find damp and mould that could put you at significant risk of harm we have to make your home safe (temporarily if necessary) within five working days of investigating. If more work is needed to stop problems returning, we have to complete that within 12 weeks and finish all related work within a reasonable time.



In an emergency, investigate and action any emergency repairs as soon as reasonably practicable and within 24 hours.



If we can't make your home safe within these timescales we will offer you suitable alternative accommodation until it is safe to return. We will cover the cost of this.



Keep clear records of how we comply with these requirements, including all communication with you and with contractors. If we can't comply for some reason beyond our control we also need records of why not.



To help us prepare for the law coming in we trained more than 300 team members and in the new year we also introduced an app designed to help colleagues to put the law into action.

As it's a new law with new ways of working we've been monitoring the situation closely to ensure we're complying. Since it came into effect we've been seeing between 100 and 200 repairs a week that meet the criteria for an emergency repair. And to-date we have been tackling more than 95% of these repairs within the 24 hour deadline with valid reasons, such as not being able to get inside the home, for those that have taken longer.

Hopefully you won't experience any significant emergencies or hazards in your home but we hope these changes improve your experience if you do, and make you feel confident we're working hard to take care of you even if things in your home are working well and safely.

And of course most repairs aren't emergencies. That's why we have a prioritisation system to ensure that we deal with the most important ones first and support people with extra needs appropriately while being fair to everyone and using our resources most efficiently.

In the first two months of Awaab's Law coming into effect around 15 repairs a week were escalated because we identified that a customer had extra needs or circumstances that made their repair more urgent.

Further measures covered in the new law will be coming into effect in the autumn of 2026 and again in late 2027 and we'll share further updates as they approach.



How we prioritise repairs

When you report a repair, how do we decide when we visit your home?

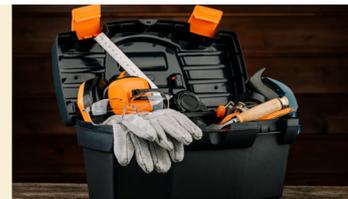
We categorise faults, repairs and maintenance into five groups. This is to make sure that we prioritise the most urgent jobs, especially those that can be dangerous, first. We also need to take extra care of customers who may be vulnerable, so this affects the priority too.

The five groups are:

1

Emergency

We try and resolve emergency repairs the same day or within 24 hours of you letting us know.



2

Fast

We attend to these problems within four working days.



3

Standard

Most of these repairs will be completed within 25 working days, but there are some that can take up to three months.



4

Your responsibility

There are some faults in your home that you need to take care of under your tenancy agreement.



5

Planned repairs and replacements

Sometimes when we investigate a fault, we may decide that you need a full replacement rather than a repair – this would typically be for things such as kitchens, bathrooms or windows. When this is the case, you may need to wait longer than for a standard repair because we will schedule it into our planned repairs programme, which may take up to 12 months.

Of course, if work is needed sooner to make things safe we will carry out a temporary repair and complete the full replacement later.



To find the full list of repairs that come under the above groups, go to [futureshg.info/repairs](https://www.futureshg.info/repairs).



Your waste, your responsibility

Fighting fly-tipping.

In 2025 we spent almost **£27,000** on recovering fly-tipping from outside our customers' homes and their communal areas, car parks, bin storage and green spaces.

As a housing association we have a responsibility to remove fly-tipping, but this is **£27,000** that could be spent on your homes if the waste wasn't dumped in the first place.

Across Derbyshire colleagues spent over 90 hours last year removing fly-tipping, which could be two and a half working weeks spent improving kitchens or fixing leaks.

- Derbyshire: **£12,653.55**
- Labour hours: **90.5**
- Total costs including labour: **£19,935.52**

Fly-tipping isn't just rubbish dumped at the side of a country road, it's also items left outside your home on the pavement or next to your bin. If you're caught fly-tipping, you risk a fine of up to £50,000. And as well as being costly to deal with – some dumped waste can be hazardous to people, animals and the environment.



Get rid of rubbish the legal way

If you can't get large and bulky items to a nearby recycling centre, then local councils offer a bulky waste collection service. There is usually a charge, but each council is different and they may do free collections at certain times of the year.

If the item is still in good condition, then many charities can collect furniture and electrical goods from your home for free – British Heart Foundation and Cancer Research both offer this!

If you use a private service to take your rubbish away, then make sure they're legitimate.

You can do this by:

- Asking for a waste registration carrier number.
- Checking this on the Environment Agency's public register or calling 0300 065 3000.
- Getting a receipt.

Report fly-tipping anonymously

We have an online form where you can report fly-tipping anonymously.

Go to futureshg.info/fly-tipping-reporting and help us keep your communities clean and safe.

Estate walkabout dates

Find one near you

Estate walkabouts are a chance for you and your neighbours to give us feedback about where you live and let us know what more we can do to help.

We have our own checks to complete on the walks too, but we're really keen to hear from everyone who lives in the communities around our 10,700 homes. We also invite partners from councils and other local organisations along, so we can all work together to support your community.

Find all our upcoming walkabouts from March until June below! If you see a street listed near where you live, you're just as welcome to come along to that one. If you're not able to join a walkabout or have some feedback you want to share right away, fill in our online form futureshg.info/estate-walkabouts-form



Please check our website or Facebook before setting out in case there have been any changes to the date or time since publication of this magazine. The walkabouts will only be cancelled due to staff sickness, bad weather or an emergency.



**Tuesday 3 March, 10am -
Stapleford, Nottinghamshire.**



Meet at Wagtail Close, NG9 8JT to walk around this area.



**Tuesday 3 March, 10:30am -
Heanor, Derbyshire.**



Meet at Valley View, DE75 7QQ to walk around Kingsway and this area.



**Wednesday 4 March, 10am -
Byfield, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Fessey Road, NN11 6XD to walk around here, Woodford Road, The Causeway and Lovett Road.



**Wednesday 4 March, 10am -
Ripley, Derbyshire.**



Meet at Neal Court Community Centre, NG16 4HQ to walk around Andrews Drive, Turner Avenue and Smith Drive.



**Thursday 12 March, 10am -
Somercotes, Derbyshire.**



Meet at the entrance to Welbeck Close, DE55 4AW to walk around this area.



**Thursday 12 March, 10:30am -
Long Eaton, Derbyshire.**



Meet at Circuit Drive, NG10 2GH to walk around here, Station Road and Speedway Close.



**Wednesday 18 March, 10am -
Daventry, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Nene Walk, NN11 4QH to walk around The Leam, Dee Walk, Nene Walk and The Witham.



**Wednesday 18 March, 11am -
Alfreton, Derbyshire.**



Meet at the green area at the front of the flats on West End, DE55 7EG to walk around West End and Outseats Drive.



**Wednesday 18 March, 11am -
Ripley, Derbyshire.**



Meet at Weston Spot Close, DE5 8JR to walk around this area.



**Wednesday 25 March, 10:30am -
Ripley, Derbyshire.**



Meet at Carr Wood, DE5 3SY to walk around this area.



**Wednesday 31 March, 11am -
Alfreton, Derbyshire.**



Meet at the top of Byron Avenue, DE55 7JZ to walk around Byron Avenue and Milton Avenue.



**Friday 10 April, 10am -
Daventry, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Cherwell, NN11 4QJ to walk around The Cherwell, Trent Walk, Avon Close, Welland Close and Staverton Road.



**Monday 20 April, 10am -
Badby, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Nene Side Close, NN11 3AD to walk around here, Pinfold Green and Pound Lane.



**Tuesday 21 April, 10am -
Daventry, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Ocean House, NN11 4TF to walk around Vernon Close, Napier Close, Sturdee Close, Jennings Close, Keys Close, Jervis Close, Evans Close and Blake Close.



**Friday 8 May, 10am -
Woodford Halse, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Gorse Road, NN11 3QN to walk around here, Nelson Avenue, Townsend, Adams Road, Barnett Crescent, Anscomb Way and Manor Road.



**Tuesday 19 May, 1:30pm -
Daventry, Northamptonshire.**



Meet at Tweed Close, NN11 4PP to walk around here, The Stour, The Wye, Waveney Close and Staverton Road.



**Wednesday 27 May, 10am -
Somercotes, Derbyshire.**



Meet at the top of Bonnington Drive, DE55 4TF to walk around this area.



More than just 'building homes'



The shortage of affordable, high-quality homes is at the heart of the housing crisis, and our Development team are continually trying to ease this by building and acquiring new affordable homes.

In 2025 we...



Completed 135 homes.



Started construction of 350 more homes.



Exchanged contracts with builders for 142 more homes.



Sold 50 shared ownership homes generating income of £4.6m.*

*As we're a not-for-profit this money will be reinvested into our current homes and more new homes.



Received great feedback from customers, with 89% saying they're very or fairly satisfied.



Very easy process and very spacious. Everything it was described to be.



I absolutely love it, and my children have settled in nicely.



It's a fantastic, beautiful new build and Futures helped me out loads.

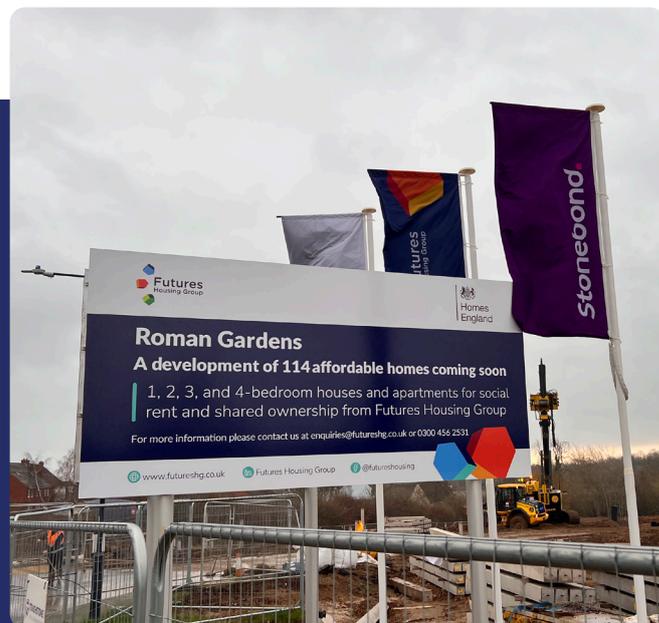


In 2026 we...

Will continue work on a new 114 affordable home site in Daventry, after work kicked off in late 2025.

'Roman Gardens' will be a mixture of one- and two-bedroom apartments and one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom houses for both social rent and shared ownership. Each property will come with solar panels, parking spaces and generous rear gardens.

Bringing new affordable homes to an area is so much more than just 'building homes', so the site will deliver over £500,000 in social value contributions. More than £100k of this will go to the NHS and the rest towards libraries and education services, from early years up to secondary school.



We will be celebrating the completion of our largest affordable home site to-date, as 191 houses and bungalows will be finished in the next few months in Somercotes, Derbyshire.

Our **Stanley Street scheme** has a mixture of affordable housing options including 90 homes for social rent, 79 for shared ownership and 11 homes for Rent to Buy.

All homes come with solar panels, electric car charging points and thicker insulation to make them more comfortable and affordable to heat.

We've contributed almost £1.5m in social value to go towards community projects, including a play area and local education services.



Stand-up Sharon

"I gave my handyman a to-do list, but he only did jobs 1, 3, and 5. Turns out he only does odd jobs."

Learning from our mistakes for a better service

Last year we had some bad news from the Housing Ombudsman. This is the government body that customers can escalate complaints to if they feel their landlord has seriously let them down. For the very first time Futures was told that two complaints that the Ombudsman had reviewed had been ruled to be cases of **'severe maladministration'** – the worst category of failure.

We were truly disappointed to know that we had let customers down to this extent. So to help ensure that we don't get things this wrong again in future we've put in place an action plan to help us learn and improve from these serious mistakes.

While the Ombudsman gives landlords a detailed report of how they think they have failed, we wanted to know more so we commissioned an independent review to take an even deeper dive into what happened in these two cases.

This was really helpful and highlighted two key areas where we can do better:

- Communication with customers, especially where we have multiple teams involved, and
- Ensuring we understand each household's circumstances and make adjustments.

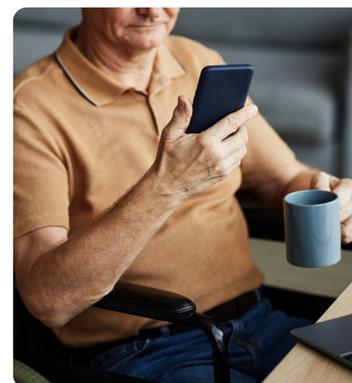


We're determined to stop these issues from getting in the way of providing a great service and work to tackle them is already underway. Here's a few of the changes we're making:

We're testing a new way of working in our Customer Service team where one person will deal with a problem a customer raises from start to finish. That will make a single person accountable for resolving it and mean that communication should be stronger as that person will have a clear overview that they can share with the customer.



We've brought in a new **'reasonable adjustments'** policy to make it clear how we can adapt our services to support customers with extra needs or who are going through difficult times. Alongside that our team ask every customer who reports a fault if there is anything we need to know about their household situation that could make this fault more of a problem – things such as disabilities, illness or young children in the home. We then know who needs more help or a faster response and can adapt our services accordingly.



Obviously major failings are not good but we want to be open about our mistakes and to share with you how we are committed to putting things right. This also highlights the importance of customer feedback all-round as – whether it's good or bad – it's a vital way for us to understand if we're meeting people's needs or not. Our routine customer surveys are a central part of this feedback process so we would encourage everyone to be open and honest if you're asked for your views on the homes we provide and the work we do.

All that feedback goes to our new Customer Voice team at Futures and this year there will be lots of new ways for customers to get more involved such as taking part in scrutiny projects and acting as a community champion.

Watch out for more information and also more details in the coming months on how your views and opinions make a real difference.



The Help Hub makeover

We've created a brand-new series of 'how to' videos to show you how to carry out easy fixes and repairs in your home.

The videos have been added to our online Help Hub and cover small repairs such as isolating leaks and fixing blocked shower heads, through to informative videos about using storage heaters and solar panels.

We want our customers to feel supported and empowered which is why the videos were all filmed in customers' homes and presented by people who work at Futures, putting your homes into the spotlight.

Looking after your home can be tricky sometimes, especially when things go wrong out of the blue. We'll always try to fix repairs as quickly as we can, but sometimes there are small jobs you might be able to do yourself at home. **That's why we made the Help Hub.**



▶ Go to www.thehelphub.futureshg.co.uk

The Help Hub

How to
plunge a
blocked toilet



As well as the 'how to' videos, the Help Hub has lots of articles and answers to frequently asked questions to help you manage your home, saving you from having to contact us or wait to have smaller issues resolved.

If you need advice about your home, go on our website to check out the Help Hub and let us know if you have a suggestion for a new article or video – we're always adding to the list!

The Help Hub

How to
isolate a leak



Stand-up Sharon

"Who won the neck decorating contest? It was a tie."

Crossword puzzle

A chef is starting to get a little hot tempered in the kitchen because it's breakfast service and a much needed item is on the blink. Solve the food themed crossword and rearrange the highlighted letters to reveal what item the chef is getting annoyed at.

Email your answer to communications@futureshg.co.uk for your chance to win a **£75 shopping voucher!** Entries close 5pm on 27 March. You must be a Futures customer to enter. Read the full terms and conditions on our website www.futureshg.co.uk/competition.

Answer _ _ _ _ _ (7)

Across

- 3. You have to break a few eggs to make this (8)
- 4. Usually in brine, oil or spring water (4)
- 6. A layered dessert (6)
- 7. You might pay to go pick this fruit in the summer (12)

Down

- 1. Chocolate treats left by a certain bunny (7,4)
- 2. This grain can be long, short, white, brown, sticky. If you're unsure ask '**uncle Ben**'.
- 5. Used to make guacamole.



Thank you



@futureshousing



Futures Housing Group



www.futureshg.co.uk



0300 456 2531

futureshg.info/customer-enquiries-form

