

Here at HORTON Spring 2025

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**IN YOUR
NEWSLETTER...**

- Your news
- Fire door safety
- Details about our new Scrutiny Group

Welcome

Welcome to the spring 2025 edition of your 'Here at Horton' newsletter.

In this edition you will find our latest news and properties, details about our new Scrutiny Group, and see our latest volunteering opportunities.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of your newsletter.

Your news

Walk around Grimwith Reservoir

A group from the Craven Rough Sleeper Pathway service in Skipton went for a four- and-a-half mile walk around Grimwith Reservoir in January. The walk was pleasant, though a little muddy and a little challenging with the steep inclines to climb and descend. The group took a break during the walk to tuck into a packed lunch and drink hot chocolate. Everyone enjoyed the outing and are already planning their next adventure.



Race to the finish line

Craven Mount in Halifax went go-karting for one of the tenant's birthdays in December. They had lots of fun and a few bruises later, finished off the day with a birthday cake.



Trip to the Royal Armouries

As their final trip of the year, a group from HACS 4 Men in Bradford visited the Royal Armouries Museum in December. The group had a great time exploring the museum and stood in awe at some of the weapons and equipment on display. The climax of their visit was seeing a live show by two performers who showed the use of swords in combat. The trip ended with well-deserved slices of cake and warm drinks at the museum café.



Day out in Brighouse

In January, the Kirklees Intensive Housing Management (IHM) service spent a day in Brighouse browsing the charity shops and stopped off at a café for a relaxing break with tea and cake.



Your news contd

MP visits Harrogate Stay Well

Harrogate and Knaresborough MP Tom Gordon visited our Harrogate Stay Well service in January. This service is for people who are experiencing mental health challenges and housing issues or homelessness in Harrogate.

Tom Gordon spoke to service participants about their experiences and he was given a tour of one of Harrogate Stay Well's flats during his visit.

He said: "It was a great experience visiting Horton Housing. Their work is invaluable, helping some of the most vulnerable people to get the support they need to get back on their feet and live independently.

"It was great to meet with some of the people they have supported as well and hear from them just how important their support has been.

"Getting to grips with mental healthcare is so important – the support often just isn't there,



as many of my constituents have made clear in sharing their harrowing stories. This makes charities like Horton Housing all the more important."

Harrogate Stay Well's participants' who were in attendance at the MP's visit, said: "To have the opportunity to meet with Tom in a safe space, was too good to miss. We got to share our experiences with him and how Harrogate Stay Well is helping us to access mental health support, signpost to local services, help us manage our finances, and find accommodation. It was refreshing to see Tom listen intently to the challenges experienced by everyone in the room."

Repair satisfaction survey

If our maintenance team come to your home to carry out a repair, you will receive a repair satisfaction survey postcard from us.

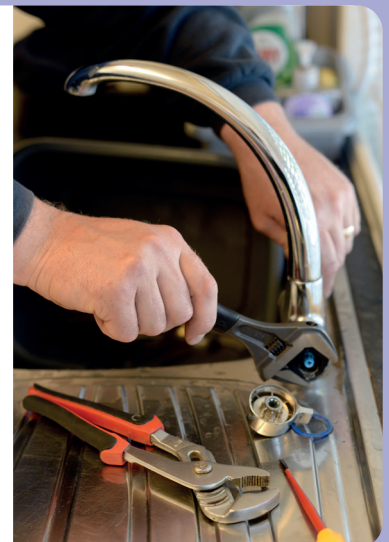
Are you satisfied or unsatisfied with the repair? Let us know by completing the survey.

Please send it back to us by using one of our pre-paid envelopes or give it to your support worker or key worker.

If you prefer, you can also complete the survey online:

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MyRepair

All completed surveys we receive will be entered into a prize draw which takes place every three months.



Contract extensions for Horton services

The Bradford Homeless Partnership service has been given a three-year contract by Bradford Council from April 2025. Under the new contract, Bradford Homeless Partnership will have more properties for families and accommodation for single men and single women.

Horton's Fairmount project has had its contract extended for another year by Bradford Council. Fairmount provides accommodation and support for people in Bradford who have experience of rough sleeping.

Our Street Reach service in Calderdale was extended for a further 12 months from April 2025. The service supports people who are at risk of rough sleeping and people who are

rough sleeping and street begging. Our Tenancy Sustainment Service in Calderdale was also extended for a further 12 months.

Craven Mount and Next Steps had their funding extended for 12 months from April 2025. The services provide accommodation and support to people in Calderdale who have experienced rough sleeping and who would like support with drug or alcohol use and/or mental health challenges.

Our Craven Rough Sleeper Pathway services in Skipton had their funding extended for a further 12 months. These services support people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness.

Horton's Intervention and Prevention Service (HIPS) in Kirklees had its funding extended until April 2026. HIPS provides accommodation and support to people in Kirklees who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

Help with paying water bills

From April 2025, water companies will increase their water charges for most households across the country. The average water bill will rise by 25%, however, this figure may be different depending on your location.

If you are struggling to pay your water bills, there are schemes available from Yorkshire Water that can help which are listed below.

Yorkshire Water can also help people save money by fitting a water meter in their property. It measures the amount of water used rather than their home's rateable value.

Bill cap schemes

- **WaterSure** - for customers who have a water meter. This is for people who claim an income-based benefit or Universal Credit, and need to use extra water because they have a medical condition or three or more children.
- **WaterSupport** - for customers who have a low household income, and whose annual water bill is more than £364.



Debt support schemes

- **Community Trust** - for customers who have arrears with Yorkshire Water between £50 and £1,500, and at least one priority debt.
- **Water Direct** - for customers who receive a deductible income-based benefit. Yorkshire Water will take payments directly from your benefits.
- **Resolve** - for customers who are struggling to catch up on previous water bills. This will allow you to pay your water bill in affordable amounts.

For more information, visit www.yorkshirewater.com/bill-account/help-paying-your-bill/ or call Yorkshire Water on 03451 299299.

Over to you!



Spring Street tenant Peter put his carpentry skills to good use by making a table, benches and planters out of some pallets. These have transformed the garden at Spring Street, creating a lovely outside space for tenants and staff to sit, relax and enjoy.



The lads at Fairmount unleashed their creativity making masks and 2025 calendars in recent arts and crafts sessions.



Some beautiful dresses were made by a group of participants at Horton Housing's Training Centre. The first set of sewing classes led by volunteer teacher Shaymaa came to an end in December. The lessons have proved to be very popular — as well as learning a new and valuable skill, the students have enjoyed helping each other, and sharing lots of ideas.



Do you enjoy doing something creative, such as producing art, making crafts or writing poetry?



We would love to see them and share them here! Please email them to **communications@hortonhousing.co.uk** or talk to your support worker.

Donations round up

From November 2024 to January 2025, we received **37** donations, we sent out **95** donations and **112** people visited our Owt for Nowt shop.

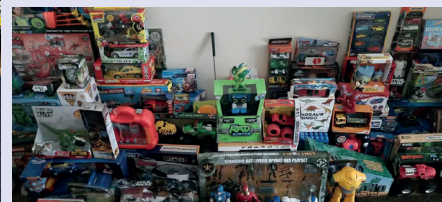
We received a large donation of furniture from Horton's Group Living Service moving to their new location in Keighley. This included: nine sets of drawers, wardrobes, desks and beds, 10 televisions, two cookers and microwaves, a washing machine and a tumble dryer.

Horton's Annual 'Warm this Winter' donations campaign which we launched in November resulted in a generous amount of winter clothing from the public. This has fully restocked our Owt for Nowt shop.

Toys were kindly donated by LIFE Church that were given to children in our services in time for Christmas.

We received a large donation of food and toiletries from Warrior Factory Martial Arts Academy. This is a regular annual donation and it helps us provide food parcels that we give to people in our schemes who are starting new tenancies.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone for their kind donations.



David's story

David lives in Horton's Fairmount accommodation and has shown great strength and determination to improve his life. Before coming to Fairmount in 2020, he was experiencing challenges with drugs and experiencing homelessness. David was referred to Fairmount after connecting with the Homeless Outreach Partnership (HOP) team. Through his time at Fairmount, David has focused on his recovery, rebuilding his relationship with his family and gaining his independence. This is his story.

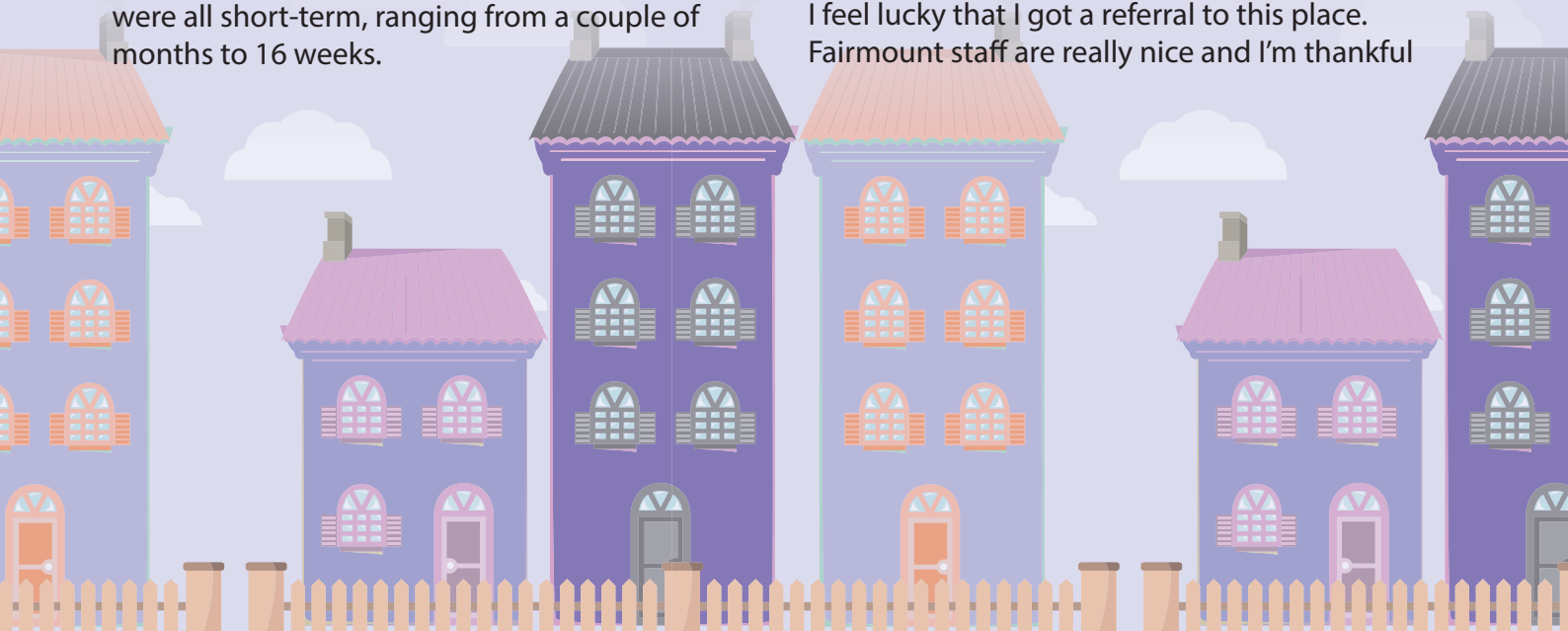
I was facing a lot of problems and didn't think it was going to end. I was homeless for three years and it was so cold at times that I didn't think I was going to survive. I would just wander around Bradford, keep my head down, take drugs, and focus on where I could find my next meal.

I tried to find somewhere dry to shelter away from the open, so I began staying outside the entrances of Bradford's shopping centre and a city centre gym. This is not allowed so I would get caught out by the security teams and police and be sent to prison. I went to prison a total of eight times. Every time I was released, I would breach the rules when I was back on the streets and be sent to prison again. My lengths of stay in prison were all short-term, ranging from a couple of months to 16 weeks.



The Homeless Outreach Partnership (HOP) team found me on the streets around 14 months before I moved into Fairmount. The team helped me with my housing benefit and referred me to local homeless shelters where I stayed for a couple of weeks. I also was able to access healthcare for my legs through Bevan Healthcare. I had been on crutches for lacerated legs as I was attacked on the street. I had to have structural work done to my legs, which was painful. I was experiencing PANDAS syndrome and would frighten other people around me with my shouting and swearing.

I moved into Fairmount when it opened in 2020. I feel lucky that I got a referral to this place. Fairmount staff are really nice and I'm thankful



for their support. It took me a couple of years to adjust to life in Fairmount and to find a bit of normality with a routine. I have been able to budget and pay for any of the repairs in my room, for food, and other bills myself. I lost trust in people when I was on the streets and being attacked, but I have been able to build trust between tenants and staff here. Trust is big – without it I wouldn't be sure what direction to take or what to do.

I like to go on the computer, watch films, listen to music and go on trips out with the other tenants and staff. I can cook – I used to be a second chef at a restaurant – so I sometimes help out at Fairmount's Cook and Eat sessions. I'm also interested in helping out at Fairmount's allotments when the weather gets better.



I have recently sponsored a donkey called Cocoa. He lives in Devon and I can see him via a webcam link. One day, I would like to visit him.

Sponsorship is only a couple of pounds a month, but I want to donate more to Cocoa when I can to help him live a good life.

I aim to cut drugs out of my life completely although I have sometimes lapsed. Each time this happened I felt angry with myself as I knew that I had taken one step back from making progress. I've been finding the strength to be clean from drugs as it can be a challenge to live in a building with others who also had similar experiences to me.

I've reconnected with my sister who lives in France, and we regularly contact each other. I'm also hoping to see my parents again. My relationship with my dad suffered and he became upset with me when I lost tenancies and had been evicted from places in the past. When it feels right, my dad will travel with my mum to visit me.

I feel happier, healthier and I'm eating better. The way I think has changed, my mental health has improved and I've calmed down a lot. I want something reasonable and secure in my life and to not get into trouble with the police. I also would like to get into a proper habit of budgeting and managing my money.

I hope to move to one of Fairmount's dispersed properties in the local area, once things are sorted and I feel ready to live on my own.

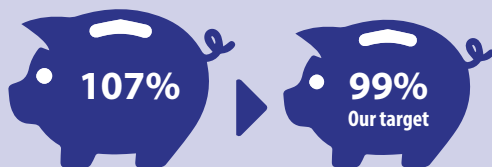


At Horton Housing we aim to provide excellent services and always look for ways to improve them.

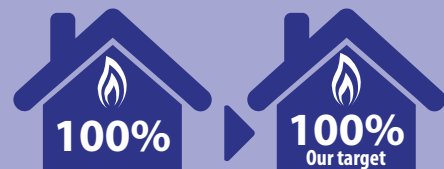
Every three months we look at our performance to see how we're doing. We measure ourselves against targets based on the performance of a group of other good housing providers, where available. Other measures are set by Horton Housing's Management Board and Senior Management Team.

Here are the latest Key Performance Indicator (KPI) figures for quarter two from 1 July to 30 September 2024. A KPI is a measure of how well we are doing.

Rent collection



Properties with a valid gas safety certificate



Tenants in arrears by eight weeks or more



This is not a good result - being 'in arrears' means owing rent. The percentage in this quarter is lower than the percentage in quarter one. We are hoping this continues in the next quarter as we are nearly on target. Most rents have been agreed and paid in full.

Satisfaction of repair received



Our Property Services administration team contacted some of you who had repairs to ask for your feedback. During quarter two:

87 calls were made. Of the **69** that answered the phone:

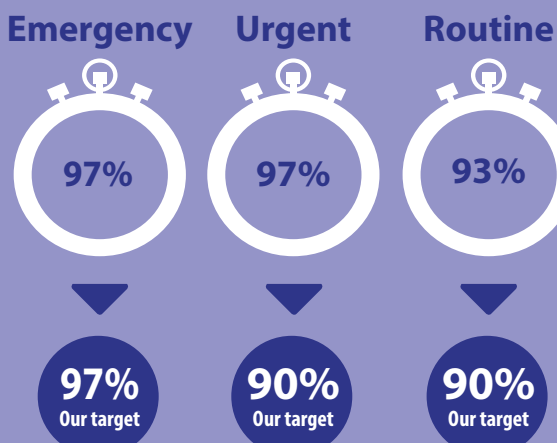
66 were very satisfied with the repair

2 were satisfied

1 was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

You can tell us about how satisfied you are with your repairs by completing the repair satisfaction postcard or completing feedback online. Please see page 4 for more details.

Repairs completed in target time



Managing damp and mould

We have a target to attend to any reports of damp and mould within three working days. This is done in order to assess the issues, and where possible, any issues that can be addressed immediately will be resolved the same day. For more complex works, for example a leaking roof, we will set a reasonable timescale for the work to be completed. This is called remedial works.

We received seven reports of damp or mould in quarter two. All reports were attended to within the target of three days. (100%)

All further remedial works were completed within target. Six were logged as urgent and completed within the required three days. One was logged as routine and that was completed within the target of 28 days.

Please help us by reporting any issues with damp and mould as early as possible.

You can find out more about managing damp and mould on our website:

<https://hortonhousing.co.uk/preventing-damp-and-mould-in-your-home>

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents

During quarter two, eight cases of ASB were still open from quarter one. Two of the cases were closed in quarter two and six cases had ongoing actions.

There were seven new reports of ASB during quarter two. All new reports were responded to within the timescale.

One of the seven new cases was closed during the quarter. This left a total of 12 open cases which are under action and are being monitored.

We received ten formal complaints in quarter two.

All formal complaints were answered within the target time.

Involvement and engagement

Horton Housing Group signed up to be official adopters of the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter in December 2020.

This means we want to make sure that:

- **you are safe and listened to**
- **you can help shape our services if you want to**
- **the homes we provide are good quality**
- **when things go wrong, it is easy for you to tell us or make a complaint and we will sort it out quickly.**

Our commitment applies to everyone, regardless of whether you live in our accommodation or are accessing any other Horton service.



My name is Claire and I work for my own company, Tentacles, to make sure people in supported and social housing are involved and engaged in the services they receive. Horton have asked me to come and work with them for a while so that I can look at new, fun and interesting ways of doing this.



In the last edition of Here at Horton, I shared what we had learned from doing our workshops, and I also gave some tips on arranging community events.

This time, I would like to talk about our Scrutiny Group. If you haven't heard of scrutiny before, you might be wondering what the group does. They came up with a brilliant line that I find helpful:

Your chance to give ideas, feedback and solutions for change.

Every month, our Scrutiny Group scrutinises a different subject that affects people using Horton's services. They look at what's good, what needs improving and what ideas they have to make things better. So far, the group have looked at:

- **Horton's website**
- **Communication**

Some of the recommendations they have made are:

- **Make the website easier to use**
- **Put information about activities and community events on the website**
- **Improve the way repairs are communicated, including making sure people have appointments**
- **Make sure colleagues talk to people, rather than just sending letters.**

We have passed the recommendations to the Senior Management Team and they will be letting us know what happens next.

Coming to Scrutiny Group means that you can have your say about how Horton works. It's a great chance to meet new people and try new things. We promise we won't be boring! You don't have to have any special skills. You're already an expert in using services at Horton. Everyone is very friendly and we'll give you support if you need it.

Scrutiny Group happens every month. We try to move to different places, so everyone has a chance to come. Your support worker can help you make travel arrangements, and we will cover the cost. We also provide lunch.

If you'd like to know more, ask your support worker for the reports from previous meetings. They will also be able to tell you when the next meeting is, and what it's about.



Meet Nabeel - our Together with Tenants Board Champion

Hi everyone!

My name is Nabeel and as a board member of Chartford Housing I am delighted to serve as the Together with Tenants Board Champion. Together with Tenants is an initiative aiming to strengthen the relationship between tenants and social landlords like Chartford. I want to make sure that you feel listened to with openness, honesty, and transparency.

I have been on the Chartford Housing board since June 2024. Chartford Housing is the development arm of Horton Housing. My motivation to join was because I lived in social housing, I know first-hand how important a place to call home is. At the same time, I also empathise deeply how impactful it can be to you when something is going wrong with the place you live. As a board member (or non-executive director as some people call them) please do not think of me as a faceless VIP – I am one of you – and I care deeply that your voice is heard.

A board member to me helps shapes strategic decisions and provides independent oversight to the organisation. I am here to challenge the executive directors. I can not think of a better way to do this then by visiting our properties and meeting our people. Being Chartford's Together with Tenants Board Champion, helps me be a better board member.

Claire from Tentacles Consultancy has organised some fantastic events where the Game of Homes was played and has taken 'Scrutiny Group' on a roadshow to gather as many opinions and views as possible from people. These are exactly the type of things I am looking forward to getting involved in. Whether it is Bromley House or Bewick House – I hope to see and chat with a few of you in the near future.

Best wishes,

Nabeel

Nabeel Alhassan



Dates for your diary 2025

March	April	May
17 St. Patrick's Day	13 – 20 Passover	5 Early May Bank Holiday
29 Clocks go forward	20 Easter Sunday	12 - 18 Mental Health Awareness Week
30 Mother's Day	21 Easter Monday (<i>Bank Holiday</i>)	26 Spring Bank Holiday
31 Eid al-Fitr (<i>date may vary</i>)		



Fire door safety

Fire doors save lives and protect your property in a fire.

If a fire starts in your building, fire doors will:

- Keep the fire and smoke in the area it started in
- Protect you and your property
- Allow time for everyone to get out safely and provide a protected route.

If you live in one of our blocks of accommodation, the front door to your flat and the doors in communal areas of your building are fire doors.

Horton Housing carries out an annual inspection of fire doors at our properties to make sure the doors meet regulations and are keeping you safe. At our buildings over 11 metres high, we carry out checks on all communal doors on a more frequent basis.

Fire doors have self-closing mechanisms, intumescent smoke seals, a frame and fire rated hinges/screws and handles and are made with fire resistant materials.

They must be in good working order and properly maintained to meet safety standards. The doors will not work if they are damaged or propped open.



To protect yourself and others:

- Do not wedge or prop fire doors open
- Do not move the door closer or adjust it
- Do not paint the door or any of its components
- Do not deface the door or drill through any part of the door or casing
- Check your front door fits snugly into the frame with no big gaps around the top, sides or bottom edge. If it doesn't, let us know.
- Check your front door closes by itself without you having to pull it shut.

Report any fire door problems or damages to a member of Horton staff immediately.



Guidance on disposal of vapes in the UK

Why proper disposal matters

- Vapes contain lithium-ion batteries, which can cause fires if damaged or disposed of incorrectly.
- They also contain plastic, metal, and electronic components that should be recycled properly.
- Some vapes contain hazardous materials like nicotine residue, which can harm the environment.

How to dispose of vapes responsibly

1. Recycling at local recycling centres

Most local council recycling centres (HWRCs) accept vapes as small electrical waste.

Find your nearest disposal point via your local council website or 'Recycle Now'.

2. Take-back schemes (retailers)

Many retailers and vape shops now offer take-back schemes where you can return used vapes.

Supermarkets and electronics retailers may also have battery recycling bins where you can drop off the battery component.



3. Specialist battery recycling bins

Vapes contain lithium-ion batteries, which should never go in general waste.

Take the battery (if removable) to a battery recycling bin at supermarkets, libraries, or electronics stores.

4. Manufacturer recycling programmes

Some vape brands have their own recycling programmes. Check the brand's website for details.

What NOT to do

- ❌ Do NOT throw vapes in general waste bins – they can cause fires.
- ❌ Do NOT flush e-liquids down the sink or drain – it can contaminate water.
- ❌ Do NOT attempt to dismantle non-removable battery vapes yourself – risk of a fire or leakage.



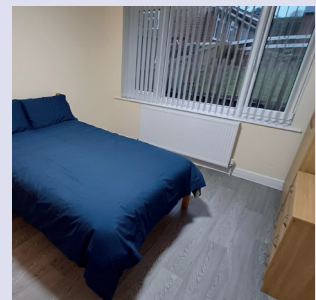
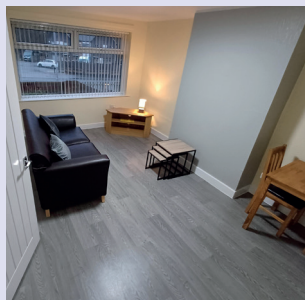
New properties to help reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping

We have recently bought and completed more properties under the Bradford Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) contract. Pictures of a couple of our recently completed properties are shown here. These properties will be offered with support in place, to people who experienced homelessness or rough sleeping in Bradford.



We also completed our work on a two-bed semi-detached bungalow to better accommodate a person/people with mobility issues. The adaptations to the property allow wheelchair access with ramps and handrails to the front door and garage, to allow storage for a mobility scooter.

A new comfort height toilet was placed in the bathroom. We installed new radiators, a new kitchen with built-in electric cooker, a new electric shower, and a new floor covering. We also carried out a full electrical rewire, fully decorated the house and upgraded the garden.



This renovation was completed by Chartford Housing. Chartford Housing is the development arm of Horton Housing Association and a Registered Provider (RP).

As a Registered Provider, Chartford Housing can access development funding from the Homes England Affordable Homes Programme.

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Latest volunteering opportunities

Would you like to volunteer at Horton Housing? Check out our latest volunteer opportunities below.



We will give you:

- Induction, support, supervision and training
- Out of pocket expenses, such as payment towards travel
- A reference if you volunteer for more than three months.

You can keep up to date and apply for our volunteer roles by visiting the volunteering section of our website: www.hortonhousing.co.uk

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to find out more, please contact our Volunteer Services Manager on **07525 667874** or email volunteer.applications@hortonhousing.co.uk

All the roles require an enhanced DBS check of which we will cover the cost.

Volunteer roles available:

Calderdale

Cooking Companion volunteer

We are looking for someone who is passionate about cooking to join in at our Cook and Eat sessions. The role involves researching recipes and planning meals to cook in the session. You will support the group to prepare and cook meals while encouraging teamwork and conversations in these sessions.

Gardener volunteer

We are looking for a proactive and motivated individual to help us with the outside space. Tasks include pruning plants, weeding and clearing any fallen leaves and rubbish. You will have some knowledge of gardening, or a willingness to learn on the go.

Please note that all the Calderdale volunteer roles listed above and on our website are based at our Young Persons' Prevention and Support Service (YPASS) in Halifax. For more information or to apply, please contact YPASS Volunteer Coordinator Tanya on **07809 203876**.

Bradford

Van Driver's Mate volunteer

You will help our drivers with organising and collecting furniture or large item donations around the region. You will need to be physically fit to lift donations, which often includes items of furniture. The role also involves keeping accurate records of our collections and deliveries.

Housekeeping volunteer

Your role will involve general cleaning of the building. This includes cleaning toilets and the kitchen area, emptying bins and sweeping and mopping floors in the communal areas. This role will help you gain experience in the cleaning sector and also provide you with work places references.

Kirklees

Activities Support and Administrative Assistant volunteer

You will be providing administration support for Horton's Substance, Tenancy and Resettlement Service (STARS) based in Huddersfield. You will also help staff to facilitate group activities and the occasional day trip out with people in the scheme.

Places in a city WORD SEARCH

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

Tick when found:

- Bank
- Cinema
- City Hall
- Court
- Fire station
- Hotel
- Library
- Museum
- Post office
- Restaurant
- School
- Shops
- Stadium
- Theatre



Our commitment to EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Horton Housing is committed to promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Our aim is for our organisation to be truly representative of all sections of society, for each individual to be treated fairly, to feel respected and be able to be their best. We are committed to ensuring that our services are appropriate and accessible to the people who need them. We are opposed to all forms of harassment and unlawful discrimination.

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy which sets out how we will meet the needs of the people we work with and our equality duties. Every year we publish an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan which sets out our targets and how we will put our commitment to equality and diversity into practice.

We have been awarded the Housing Diversity Network Accreditation (DNA)

recognising our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We are a member of the Housing Diversity Network.



get IN TOUCH!...

If you have ideas on what you would like to see in the newsletter or to give any feedback, please get in touch.

You can contact us through your support worker or by emailing:
communications@hortonhousing.co.uk

Or you can write to us at:

**Communications
Horton Housing
54 Little Horton Lane
Bradford
BD5 0BS**

Phone us on **01274 370689**



Or connect with us on social media

Facebook: search for 'Horton Housing Association'

X: @hortonhousing

Instagram: Horton Housing