

Matters

Neighbourhood

Issue 23: Summer 2026



Scouts and customers work together for Community Badge

Skip Day leads to successful community clean up

Decision on the future of housing management





Cheddar, Axbridge and North Sedgemoor Villages

Burnham-on-Sea, Highbridge, Brean and Berrow

Hamp, North Petherton, South Bridgwater Villages and La Ciotat

Sydenham and the Levels

Woolavington, Puriton and Polden and Parrett Villages

Bridgwater Central and West Bridgwater Villages

Corporate News

-  HomesinSomerset
-  @homesinsomerset
-  customer.services@homesinsomerset.org
-  www.homesinsomerset.org
-  0800 585 360 / 01278 552400
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Don't forget to follow us on social media and check our website!



Hello and Welcome



Dear customers,

We are pleased to have received the final decision by Somerset Council for us to take on the management of all its 10,000 homes from September (this includes the 4,000 we already manage). This decision follows an independent review of housing management arrangements last year which recommended that we manage all of Somerset Council's housing following customer and stakeholder engagement.

You might be asking what will change for you? Be assured, very little will change in the short term as we want to continue to provide excellent services to you.

Many things will remain the same – importantly, Somerset Council will remain your landlord and the same colleagues will provide services and undertake repairs. Now the decision has been made, we are working hard to bring together the two housing teams at Homes in Somerset and Somerset Council. This is hugely exciting as it offers an opportunity to provide more consistent services across Somerset, building on the best of both and making improvements where they are needed. Any change will be managed properly to ensure minimal disruption to our customers. If you aren't already aware, there is a frequently asked question and answer section on our website which is updated regularly. You can also contact our Customer Services Team using the contact details on this page if you want to ask a question. Beyond the options appraisal, I am pleased that this edition of Neighbourhood Matters showcases how we continue to work with customers and develop and manage homes that we can all feel proud of. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

Enjoy the spring weather.

Peter Hatch
Chief Executive

Somerset Council housing management services: Housing Options Appraisal decision

Since April 2023, Somerset Council, which owns in excess of 10,000 homes, has operated two models of housing management after bringing together the services of the former Sedgemoor and Somerset West and Taunton Councils, the only two district councils which owned housing stock.

The current housing management services are split, with around 6,000 homes managed in-house by Somerset Council and around 4,000 homes managed by Homes in Somerset, a not-for-profit arms-length management organisation (ALMO) wholly owned by Somerset Council.

In May last year, the council advised that it would be conducting an independent review, carried out by external consultants Savills, to identify how these services could be aligned, ensure consistency and deliver best value for money for all Somerset Council and Homes in Somerset tenants and leaseholders in the future.

Stakeholder and customer (tenant and leaseholder) engagement took place in the form of in-person meetings at local venues, online sessions and surveys to gather views and understand what really matters to our customers. More information about the Housing Options Appraisal is on our website at www.homesinsomerset.org.

At the meeting of the Somerset Council Executive on 11 March 2026, members supported the recommendation by Savills, to place the management of all of Somerset Council's housing with Homes in Somerset. More information is available in Savills' Housing Options Appraisal Final Report, which can be found on the Somerset Council website.

Following this and in accordance with Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, a final stage of consultation with Somerset Council tenants and leaseholders began on 25 February and closed on 8 April 2026. Responses to this consultation showed support for the approach.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey and share your thoughts and feedback.

We are now pleased to announce that Chris Hall, Executive Director – Community, Place & Economy, Somerset Council, to whom the final decision has been delegated, in consultation with the Lead Member for the Housing Revenue Account, agrees to place the management and maintenance of all of Somerset Council's housing with Homes in Somerset.

We understand that you may have questions or concerns, however as we have said in previous updates, please be assured that:

- Somerset Council will remain your landlord and your rights as a tenant or leaseholder will not change; you will remain a tenant/leaseholder of Somerset Council
- Your homes and commercial premises will continue to be repaired, maintained and invested in as they are currently and there will be no change to your rent or services charges beyond the normal annual review and increase
- You will continue to receive the high standards of service you have been receiving
- Your repairs and maintenance services will be provided through Homes in Somerset

Nothing will change immediately. We anticipate the change to take effect from September. There will be a transition period over the next four months, during which time we will communicate with all customers to ensure that you understand any changes and how you can continue to engage with the service.

We will continue to keep you informed through the customer newsletter and e-newsletter, on our website and on our social media platforms.

Published Frequently Asked Questions are available on our website at www.homesinsomerset.org and should address many of your questions.

Alternatively, you can contact our Customer Services Team on 0800 585 360 or via email at customer.services@homesinsomerset.org.



Empowering customers to take positive action

A routine boiler check for one customer turned into a more meaningful operation when our Housing Officer Sian Griffin stepped in to support him to clear his cluttered home.

When engineers couldn't access the boiler due to the customer struggling with a disorganised home, Sian helped him by setting small, realistic goals to help him break down the tasks he needed to achieve.

Sian said: "The situation was understandably overwhelming for him, and it was clear that the clutter was not only affecting his home but also contributing to the strain on his mental wellbeing.

"Rather than stepping in to do the work for him, we agreed on a different approach—one that focused on empowering him to take control of the situation himself."

The customer recognised that tackling this alone would be difficult, and he agreed to reach out to family members for support. This was a significant step—asking for help isn't always easy, but it showed his commitment to moving forward.

There were moments when he tried to cancel visits or avoid check ins, which often happens when progress feels daunting. But we had agreed on clear expectations and a timeline and Sian explained that she wanted to see meaningful improvement within seven days, and that she believed he was fully capable of achieving it with the right support.

When Sian returned a week later, the transformation was remarkable.

The property had been cleared, creating a safe space for the boiler works to be scheduled—and even more importantly, giving the customer a fresh start.

The pride he felt in completing the clearance himself, with help from his family, was evident. What began as a practical problem had turned into a moment of personal success and renewed confidence.



Safeguarding support

We're dedicated to listening to and supporting customers. Between December 2025 and March 2026, the Housing Team has responded to seven domestic abuse incidents and opened 28 antisocial behaviour (ASB) cases, closing 20 of those with an average case turnaround time of 82.8 days.

In total, 153 ASB cases and 14 safeguarding cases were responded to.

Domestic abuse cases responded to	7
ASB cases opened	28
ASB cases closed	20 (average case turnaround 82.8 days)
ASB incidents responded to	153
Safeguarding cases responded to/ referrals made	14

Customers at General Higgins House, in Highbridge, enjoyed an Easter Monday BBQ. A great time was had by all and the sun was shining!



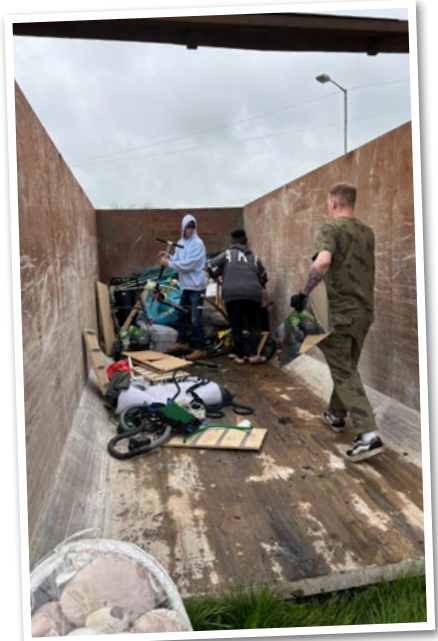


First Skip Day of the year a huge success

A Skip Day held in the Sydenham area of Bridgwater was a great success.

We organised for a large skip to be placed on the green at Fairfax Road and another by the flats at Eastwood Close, and it was fantastic to see so many customers eagerly coming out to clear their household clutter and rubbish.

The skip at Fairfax Road was completely filled by 11.30am, just one hour after it arrived!



Upgrades to charging facilities



Contractors Bell Group will deliver a new mobility scooter charging facility at Dunwear House, supporting residents to maintain independence and improve day-to-day living.

The project, identified in partnership with us, responds to the growing need for safe and reliable charging for mobility scooters. For many residents, these scooters are essential for staying mobile, connected, and independent.

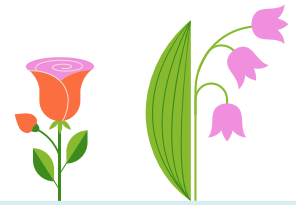
To be delivered as part of Bell Group's social value commitment, the facility will provide:

- Dedicated charging points for safe, dependable use
- Secure storage for residents' mobility scooters
- Easy-access design to support usability
- Protection from the elements for year-round reliability

This investment will enable residents to continue everyday activities with confidence, from attending appointments to maintaining social connections.

The project highlights how targeted social value initiatives can deliver practical, lasting benefits for local communities. Bell Group is proud to support us and Dunwear House residents through this meaningful improvement.





Customers support Scout group gaining Community Badge

1st North Petherton Scouting Squirrels recently completed their Community Impact Badge with the help of Homes in Somerset and customers at Baymead Meadow.

They created some large planters, which remain outside of Baymead Hall, and some pot plants which were given to the residents that attended.

Each Squirrel also planted their own sunflower to take home. Squirrels will be holding future events at the hall, including bingo in September and hope to continue to engage more with the community.

One customer said how lovely it was to see the children enjoying getting muddy and having fun.

Baymead Meadow customers in North Petherton enjoyed an afternoon Easter tea with crafts and hot cross buns.



Supporting the Campaign to Stop Social Housing Stigma

Homes in Somerset has joined the Stop Social Housing Stigma campaign to support customers in light of research which shows that just under half of social housing tenants feel stigmatised.

The Stop Social Housing Stigma campaign is a tenant-led initiative, but with a strong emphasis that we all need to work together to break the stigma.

Across the country one in three social housing tenants say they feel embarrassed to live in social housing.

We support the campaign by sharing research, resources, and listening to our customers.

Laura Briggs, Communications Officer, said: "Anything we can do to break down barriers for our customers is a top focus for us at Homes in Somerset, and we applaud this campaign which aims to stop the stigma around being a customer of social housing. As members of the campaign we can learn more about the challenges that face our customers, and work together with them to overcome issues."

The campaign relies on customers' input, and you can become a tenant member of the campaign by visiting stopsocialhousingstigma.org/become-a-member.

Big Spring Clean

Inspired by the national Big Spring Clean campaign, our Community Enablers, Jade and Sharon, organised a litter pick at Bridgwater's Victoria Park in March.

Volunteers got stuck in as part of the clean up, where bags of litter were collected during the event.

It was great to see everyone working together and supporting our community.



Community litter pick



We came together with North Petherton residents and the Leader of Somerset Council, Bill Revans, to help clean up the town as part of a community litter pick.

The event was a real joint effort, with people giving up their time to help make the area cleaner and more welcoming for everyone who lives there. From picking up litter to chatting with neighbours, the day showed the strength of the local community and what can be achieved when everyone works together.

Our Community Enabler, Sharon Collard, said: "Coming together with local residents and the Leader of the Council, Bill Revans, for the North Petherton litter pick was a real team effort. It was great to be part of something that made such a positive difference to the area.

"We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part, including local residents and Councillor Bill Revans, for supporting the event and helping to look after the area. Community activities like this make a real difference and help bring people together."



College course to offer opportunities across the county

Homes in Somerset fully supports a brand-new college course to be offered to hundreds of workers at the UK's biggest electric vehicle battery plant.

Agratas, part of the Tata Group – which also owns Jaguar Land Rover – is building the factory on a brownfield site near Bridgwater, and says it will provide 4,000 jobs.

Skills England, part of the Department for Work and Pensions, said it developed the new battery manufacturing apprenticeship unit in three months following a "rapid" consultation with employers and sector experts.

You can find out more about employment and apprenticeships with the company at www.agratas.com.





Scrutiny meets to discuss domestic abuse services

The Scrutiny Group met to ensure an independent review of our services and to challenge the delivery of services.

Cyan Matthews and Sarah Mees, from our Housing Team, provided support to a team of 20 customers from across Somerset Council and Homes in Somerset in conducting a thorough review of the support offered to customers experiencing domestic abuse.

Their involvement ensured that the review was comprehensive and customer-focused.

Customers took part in activities designed to gather their opinions, feedback, and suggestions on what should be changed, repaired, improved, or reconsidered.

The scrutiny exercise concentrated on several important aspects related to domestic abuse services.

These included:

- Evaluation of the Domestic Abuse Policy currently in place
- Review of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) report overview and its recommendations
- Examination of case management procedures
- Identification of barriers that customers may face when reporting domestic abuse

Through this customer-led scrutiny, the Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Committee (STAC) can ensure that the voices of customers are heard and that the services provided to those experiencing domestic abuse are thoroughly examined and, where necessary, challenged to drive improvements.

STAC member Mike said: “I was at the domestic abuse scrutiny session as an observer, having pre-read the Scrutiny Policy (an excellent document I must add) prior to the meeting, the day consisted of discussing the document piecemeal giving the attendees ample opportunity to voice opinions and make comments which were noted and may be used in the final draft, various questionnaires were handed out for completion as a group by those on individual tables thus enhancing the feel good factor for all involved.”



Service Improvement Panel update

Service Improvement Panel members meet monthly to discuss and review key areas of service delivery. The meetings offer the chance for customers to exchange ideas and encourage constructive feedback to contribute to ongoing service improvement across all areas of the business.



In the most recent meeting the panel reviewed our Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment against the Complaint Handling Code.

Did you know!

Did you know... there are a number of ways you can get involved!
 – Visit www.homesinsomerset.org or email community.engagement@homesinsomerset.org for more information.





STAC member update

I joined Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Group (STAC) a year ago and after a slow start, settling myself in, I now feel confident I can achieve my goal to make a difference.

STAC meets every other month and has a very in depth agenda.

Over the last year we have been focusing on many subjects including the Somerset Council Housing Options Appraisal Consultation.

As part of this subject, we have formed a new subcommittee for the new policies required. I am part of that committee along with two other Homes in Somerset tenants, three Somerset Council tenants and employees from both organisations.

The Options Appraisal process has progressed excellently, thanks to the hard work achieved by all and I've gained a huge amount of knowledge. I'm looking forward to contributing to the next stage.

STAC has chosen two subjects for Scrutiny 2026/27, which are complaint handling and support to sustain a tenancy.

I am thoroughly enjoying my position in STAC and we would welcome any new recruits. Please contact your Community Enabler for more details.

Lorna Curtis-Davies
STAC member

**CUSTOMER
DRIVEN**



Making a Difference Fund

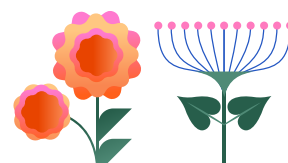
The Making a Difference (MaD) panel supported 14 community projects between April 2025 – March 2026, with a total spend of £7,000. The MaD fund awards grants of up to £500 that local community groups can apply for. Some of the groups who received funding included:

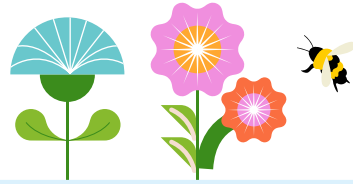
- Sydenham Improvement Group
- Sedgemoor Community Connector
- In Charley's Memory
- Rhode Lane Wanderers
- Puriton Pantry
- Nelsons Trust
- Robert Blake School
- Hamp School
- Bitham Walk Christmas Meal
- North Petherton Rugby Club
- Hamp Infants School

- Women's British Legion
- Hilda Coles extra care scheme
- Mingle Café
- Main Activities Culture
- Young Somerset Charity
- Puriton Pre-School

Many thanks to customers Kim, Jane, Ann and Monica for managing the panel and making sure the funding benefits our communities.

If you know a community group who is in need of funding, you can apply on our website at www.homesinsomerset.org/your-home/get-involved.





Garden Competition 2026

We believe that gardens, whether grand or modest, bring life, colour, and joy to our communities. That is why we are excited to launch this year's customer Garden Competition, designed to recognise and reward our customers who dedicate time and effort to their outdoor spaces.

Whether you have a sprawling garden, a small but green haven, or vibrant baskets and containers, we want to celebrate your passion for gardening!

Competition categories

This year, we invite you to enter your garden into one of five exciting categories:

- Best Large Garden – a showcase of beauty and creativity in spacious outdoor areas.
- Best Small Garden – proof that wonderful things come in small packages!
- Best Containers, Pots, and Baskets – stunning displays of flowers, plants, and greenery in creative arrangements.
- Best Community or Communal Garden – bringing neighbours together through shared spaces.
- Best Vegetable Patch – a tribute to homegrown produce and sustainability.

Additionally, we are introducing the Nominated Garden category, where our colleagues will select and honour a garden that stands out for its dedication and creativity.

How to enter

Participating is easy! Simply reach out to our Community Enabler Team on **0800 585 360**, email **community.engagement@homesinsomerset.org** or visit our website.

Judging and prizes

Judging will take place on Tuesday, July 21, and Wednesday, July 22, where we will assess each entry for its charm, effort, and impact.

Winners in each category will receive a **£50 Love2Shop voucher**.

Runners-up will receive a **£25 Love2Shop voucher**.

All entrants will receive a special invitation to an Afternoon Tea in August, where we will celebrate your gardening achievements and announce the winners!

Gardens do more than brighten individual homes—they strengthen our neighbourhoods and bring people together. No matter the size of your outdoor space, this competition is for you. So, grab your gardening gloves and show us what you have nurtured this year!

We cannot wait to see your entries and celebrate the gardens that make our communities thrive. Scan the QR code or visit **www.homesinsomerset.org** for more information.





Positive work from the Independent Living Team

Our newest team member, Adrianna Rybak, has truly made a positive impact since joining us. As she is Polish, she's been instrumental in helping us communicate with several customers we previously struggled to reach, making a real difference in their experience with our services.

Over Easter, the team organised some lovely Easter goodies to be shared at the drop-in sessions over the holiday season to bring a bit of cheer to everyone involved.

With the help of the Income Team securing funding, we have been able to help some of our customers over sixty who are finding it tough to manage heating costs. We're also actively arranging hardship funding for others who have low incomes, to make sure no one falls through the cracks.

There's been a real team effort to catch up on our yearly reviews. Each week, the Independent Living Service (ILS) team visits 60 customers, with an additional 53 monthly visits, and, at the time of printing, we have 16 empty homes across all ILS schemes. In March alone, the team

completed two Blue Badge applications, helped with one pension credit claim, assisted with four housing benefit forms, made three safeguarding referrals, submitted two Attendance Allowance applications, referred a customer to a Village Agent, and made a Somerset Independence Plus referral. Additionally, we've helped 10 new customers settle in. For those customers we don't visit, 481 outbound calls go out weekly, giving them the opportunity to request a call back or simply let us know they're doing fine.

We also have an important update regarding customer key management. We've decided to move away from keeping customers' keys in the old offices, as accessing them in an emergency was often difficult and sometimes resulted in costly repairs if entry was needed. Instead, we're now fitting each property with a key safe, to be used only in emergencies. Only ILS, Lifeline, and the ambulance service will have access to the codes. Over the next few months, we will be purchasing more key safes and Geoff Butler, our handyman, will be installing them.

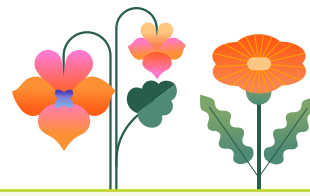
Amazing results for Income Team

Our Income Team is celebrating some fantastic results for the end of the year, including the lowest ever recorded arrears.

Along with this, they have also hit many other achievements:

- Current customer arrears are the lowest ever recorded at Homes in Somerset – 0.56% vs 0.63% in 2024/25
- Income Officers have supported 233 customers migrating to Universal Credit
- Over £17,000 granted to over 60s to help keep warm over the winter (externally funded)
- Over £17,000 granted to customers experiencing financial hardship to support with energy costs, food and furniture
- Six evictions completed (four had already vacated) bringing six properties back into stock for allocation to those in real need of a home
- Rechargeable repair costs – recovered over £30,000 in the last year





Westminster meeting hails Homes in Somerset “powerhouse” for the South West

Hailed as leaders in the sector for retrofit, and making homes fit for the future, Homes in Somerset championed social housing in the South West, as the only Arms Length Management Organisation represented at a recent All Party Parliamentary Group meeting at Westminster.

With representatives from across the housing sector attending the meeting on “Making Homes Fit for the Future and Built to Last”, Property Services, Investment and Sustainability Manager Rik Saunders and Retrofit Coordinator James Nagle, joined the discussions about what works and what doesn’t when it comes to future-proofing homes.

Homes in Somerset was described as the new “powerhouse” for the South West region, with Dunwear House – the latest retrofit project – being eagerly discussed.

Homes England gave a presentation on the need to bring properties into the 21st century rather than building new homes and then having to

retrofit them five years down the line.

Energy companies shared disappointment that ECO 4 funding was being cut, but recognised the need to allow housing providers, like us, a bigger fund to call upon to improve an outdated and poor performing stock.

Rik and James had the opportunity to feed into a questions and answers session at the event, where they highlighted where they felt the Sustainable Housing Fund lacked focus. They asked why the Government funding streams had such short timeframes, and why cap at reaching Energy Performance Certification C, when we could set the bar even higher.

Rik said: “It was an informative and well represented committee meeting, with all areas of retrofit represented. HiS was made to feel most welcome and we look forward to maintaining the great new partnerships for information sharing that we created on the day.”



Eco-friendly council development opens in Minehead

All 54 of the eco-friendly homes in Rainbow Way, Minehead, a mix of 33 flats and 21 houses, are let and occupied by local people with strong connections to the area.

The site off Seaward Way was identified by the former Somerset West and Taunton Council and progressed to completion by Somerset Council and Homes in Somerset, the Council’s housing development delivery partner.

Councillor Federica Smith Roberts, Somerset Council’s Lead Member for Communities, said: “We are all delighted to celebrate the opening of the Seaward Way/Rainbow Way development, a landmark moment for Minehead, bringing high quality zero-carbon homes to Somerset which residents deserve.”

The opening ceremony on Wednesday, 14 January was also attended by Somerset Council’s Leader Bill Revans who said: “The Seaward Way development opening marks the first council homes to come to

the town in 30 years. This is a huge achievement by everyone involved, bringing the types of home to the area that residents can be proud of.”

A resident from Shell House in Rainbow Way, said: “I’m so glad I found my flat at Rainbow Way. It felt like home from the moment I walked in. The affordability was a game-changer for me, especially after dealing with rising costs in private renting.”

You can read more about the development at www.homesinsomerset.org.



New homes in honour of much-loved tenant ambassador Livi

A former derelict pub site in Taunton has officially opened as the renamed Lavinia House, an eco-conscious eight home development on the site of the Oxford Inn.

The transformation of the Oxford Inn to one- and two- bedroom flats, and two two-bedroom houses, has been named in honour of Lavinia (Livi) Mongare.

Livi was a valued member of the council's old Tenants Forum for many years before becoming Vice Chair of the Tenants Action Group. Not only was she well liked but also very well respected not just by tenants but council officers as well. That respect was earned through her hard work and commitment in her belief that the tenant came first.

In February, the site opening was officially celebrated, with attendees including members of Livi's family, Somerset Council representatives, Leader of Somerset Council Bill Revans and Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts, Homes in Somerset Chief Executive Peter Hatch, customers and the Homes in Somerset Development Team.

Livi's granddaughter Esme was invited to cut the ribbon, and said: "She would be very proud, she cared about her community, and she came from nothing and worked so hard raising her sons, and becoming a voice for other tenants."

This project represents a substantial investment

by Somerset Council, underlining its commitment to providing high-quality, sustainable homes for local people. The development has brought investment into the local economy, supporting jobs and working with local contractors. Community engagement was central to the project, ensuring the new homes meet local needs and aspirations.

Matthew Tiley, Development Project Officer at Homes in Somerset, said: "We're pleased to celebrate the official opening of Lavinia House. This development provides much needed housing for the area and offers residents a modern, comfortable place to live. Seeing the project completed is a real milestone for everyone involved, and it's great to now be welcoming people into their new homes. We hope this development will become a valued part of the community and contribute positively to the area for years to come."

During demolition of the pub, Classic Builders, who built the development, immediately prioritised sustainability by salvaging as many reusable materials as they could, and offered them free to local residents, reducing waste and encouraging recycling.

You can read more about Lavinia House at www.homesinsomerset.org.



New council homes to come to sought after east Somerset village

Somerset Council, in partnership with Homes in Somerset and Grove Property developers, is set to deliver nine new council rental homes in Charlton Adam – the first in the east of the county for more than three decades. This £2.5 million project is part of a wider 35-home development, funded through Right to Buy receipts and aligned with the council's Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme.

These new homes form part of the council's ambitious strategy to deliver 580 new homes over the next five years, prioritising affordability, sustainability, community wellbeing and meeting high environmental standards, helping to tackle fuel poverty and support Somerset's climate goals.

Construction of the new homes is progressing well, with the new homes expected to be ready for local people to move into by the summer of 2026.

Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts said: "We are

committed to building high-quality, affordable homes that meet the needs of Somerset's residents and strengthen our communities for the future. This is an important step for us, where we are providing social housing owned by the council for the first time in many years within the south of Somerset. I hope that we will continue to look for further opportunities to provide more of these in the future."

Duncan Harvey, Head of Development at Homes in Somerset, said: "It is fantastic that we are helping Somerset Council bring new genuinely affordable rented homes to the village. I hope this is the first of many new council homes in the east of the county. Rural communities like Charlton Adam are expensive places to live, and too many local people are priced out of the market. There is a buzz and an air of anticipation from local people at the prospect of getting a home at a price they can afford. Our relationship with Grove Property has been amazing from day one and I applaud their commitment to bring new council homes to the village."



Chair of the Board update

Well, spring is here with hopefully better weather for all. The new financial year represents a really important year for Homes in Somerset (HiS) following the outcome of the independent Options Appraisal to determine which single housing delivery model should be delivered for Somerset Council. We have received approval with the recommendation for expanding HiS, made by Somerset Council, and our likely “go-live” date is September.

This transition time will be critically important in setting out the culture and aspirations of HiS as the new 10,000 home landlord, bringing together the best of the two previous delivery models. It is a very complex process but at the heart of it lies the very clear intent to ensure that the experiences of customers are as positive as possible. We recognise the current difficulties for people and families with highly unstable situations globally and cost-of-living challenges nationally. Our aim is to try to

provide stability and certainty where possible through delivering high performing services.

Reflecting on the financial year 2025/26, it has been one of very high achievement in key performance areas, including overall satisfaction from customers with the services received. We are working in very close partnership with Somerset Council to share information as well as develop joint plans and policies. Customer safety will always be our main aim as we plan for managing 10,000 homes. We, as a Board, have continued to hold our regular formal meetings as well as our Board Innovation Days to consider future strategy and aspirations.

I wish everyone well as summer approaches alongside many challenges and opportunities.

Paul Stephenson, Chair of the Board

Welcoming Craig to the Board



We were delighted to welcome Craig, former Vice Chair of the Sedgemoor Tenants Assurance Committee (STAC), to our Board in December.

Craig brings lived experience and a strong customer voice to our governance.

At Homes in Somerset, we're proud that involved customers sit on our Board alongside councillors and independent members.

This ensures decisions are informed by real customer insight and our communities' priorities. Through STAC, the tenant voice is at the heart of our governance, providing customer based assurance that we meet and exceed the Consumer Regulatory Standards.

Craig is also an actively involved customer who regularly joins our estate walkabouts, helping us listen, learn and act in our neighbourhoods.

Supporting displaced people



We have been working together with Somerset Council to support displaced people through a dedicated scheme for Afghan supporters of British forces.

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme specifically focuses on providing a route to safety for Afghan families that helped British people in Afghanistan during the war, including British Nationals and their families, Afghans who loyally served the UK, and others identified as particularly at-risk, such as campaigners for women's rights, human rights defenders, those awarded a UK government-funded scholarship, journalists, judges, and members of the LGBT community.

Through the £1.2 billion Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF), English councils are expected to provide around 6,900 homes by 2026 for displaced people, including more than 1,500 homes for Afghan families on resettlement schemes. This fund allows councils to address immediate needs and in the longer-term will create a legacy for UK nationals by building a sustainable stock of affordable housing for local communities.

Somerset Council purchased 32 homes through the first round of the LAHF and is purchasing 13 homes during the third round. The council did not participate in the second round. Homes in Somerset is supporting the work by procuring the homes and the fund also allows the council to buy homes to be used as temporary accommodation for local, homeless families.

Shane Smith, Specialist for Homes in Somerset's Development Team, said: "The homes we are buying with government funding will house homeless families in Somerset and also Afghan families at risk, prioritising those who helped the UK efforts in Afghanistan and who stood up for those values which we share. As a bonus, all the homes purchased will become general needs affordable housing after the first let. Any project which increases the amount of much needed affordable housing is certainly welcome."

Be wary of scam calls

Customers are being warned to watch out for scams including cold calls to have their lofts re-insulated and "health and safety checks".

We've been hearing about an increasing number of scam calls across the area offering remedial work and checks to properties. It's important you know who is calling before you agree to any works being carried out. We will always advise customers if we are carrying out works in your area.

Never feel pressured to sign up to any scheme off the back of a cold call. Always ask for credentials, and if in doubt, check if the scheme is approved by Homes in Somerset by giving us a call.



Flagship retrofit project to reduce fuel poverty

SUSTAINABILITY
BY DESIGN



We have piloted a flagship retrofit project which aims to ensure a current residential dwelling meets carbon neutral standards, helping to reduce fuel poverty.

Dunwear House, in Bridgwater, is now benefiting from photovoltaic solar panels on the roof, replacement doors and windows, and other upgrades.

Co-funded with Government grants, the project will save customers money on their energy bills, and will enhance the property's eco-credentials.

We worked with MD Group, Rand Associates, Bell Group and Envirocall, with the project supported by the South West Net Zero Hub.

James Nagle, Retrofit Coordinator at Homes in Somerset, said: "This flagship project at Dunwear House reflects our long-term commitment to maintaining and improving our homes in a responsible and considered way. By investing in high quality, proven measures such as replacement windows and doors, alongside renewable technologies like solar panels, we are improving comfort for residents while reducing energy consumption and running costs.

This pilot scheme will help us understand how similar improvements can be delivered across our wider housing stock in the future."

Since March, we've made strong progress delivering solar installations to our homes through the Social Housing Fund (SHF), bringing both environmental and household benefits. The results so far are something to be proud of:

- 7.5 tonnes of carbon emissions has been saved
- This is equivalent to planting 151 trees
- This matches the impact of removing 3.6 tonnes of coal use

These installations are already helping customers reduce their energy use, lower bills, and live in more sustainable homes. It's a practical step forward in improving the quality and efficiency of our housing stock while doing our part for the environment.

This is just the beginning. As the programme continues, we look forward to building on this momentum and delivering even greater benefits for our customers and communities.

First ALMO to adopt Sustainability Reporting

We have become the first arms-length management organisation (ALMO) to adopt the Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing (SRS) in another step to driving forward the environmental agenda.

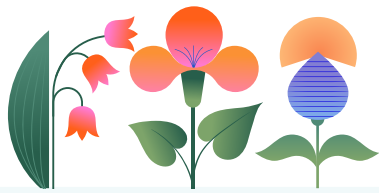
Managing homes and providing services on behalf of Somerset Council, it's our mission to provide healthy homes and inspire stronger communities in Somerset. The SRS aligns with our corporate strategy, underpinned with Sustainability by Design.

Laura Briggs, Communications Officer at Homes in Somerset, said: "We want to drive forward our sustainability goals and look more closely at how we can make positive changes.

"The Sustainability Reporting Standard for Social Housing is a benchmark that gives us an opportunity to join others in the industry making change for better, and we are firmly putting nature and our environment back on the agenda."

Piers Williamson, Chair of Sustainability for Housing, said: "It is great to welcome Homes in Somerset to our growing Adopters community. We are excited to see how they will integrate the SRS into existing strategies across the organisation. It is particularly important to us that we evidence as many different approaches to the provision of Social and Affordable Housing across the UK. As our first ALMO Adopter, we are looking forward to seeing how Homes in Somerset uses the SRS to meet the needs of the communities they serve."





Improving your community

CUSTOMER
DRIVEN



We love working together with customers and the wider community to improve outdoor spaces by identifying new ways to make a positive difference during our regular estate walks. Thank you to everyone who supported us in helping keep our communities safe, attractive, and a great place to call home!

Join us for your local estate walk:

June 2, 10am
Co-Op, Parkway,
Sydenham
(Dunwear)

June 4, 10am
Morland Shops,
Morland Road,
Highbridge

June 17, 10am
School Fields,
Cannington

June 23, 10am
St Mary's
Church Hall,
Nether Stowey

July 7, 10am
Re-creation,
Rhode Lane,
Hamp

July 16, 10am
St George's Hall,
Kendale Road,
Newtown

July 21, 10am
Westover Green,
West Street,
Bridgwater

August 5, 10am
Fish & Chip Shop,
Bitham Walk,
Woolavington

August 11, 10am
Morland Shops,
Morland Road,
Highbridge

September 8, 10am
Rosewood Close Hall,
Burnham-on-Sea

September 8, 11.30am
Corner of Ringstone
(off Withy Road),
West Huntspill

September 22, 10am
Penn Close,
Cheddar

**September 22,
11.15am**
Houlgate Way,
Axbridge

October 6, 10am
Co-op, Parkway,
Sydenham
(Fairfax)

October 15, 10am
Re-creation centre,
Hamp

October 20, 10am
Co-op, Parkway,
Sydenham
(Dunwear)

November 3, 10am
Westover Green,
West Street,
Bridgwater

November 10, 10am
Fish & Chip Shop,
Bitham Walk,
Woolavington

November 12, 10am
St George's Hall,
Kendale Road,
Newtown

November 17, 10am
Morland Shops,
Morland Road,
Highbridge

December 1, 10am
Baymead Hall,
North Petherton





Learning from complaints

The introduction of Awaab's law in October 2025 has allowed us to demonstrate our robust processes for dealing with damp and mould.

By following the correct processes to address any issues from customers, we have been able to log, triage and respond to all reports of damp and mould.

Please do contact us if you are experiencing any issues.

We are also aware that our customers may be contacted by third parties and encouraged to log a disrepair claim against us, with the promise of receiving compensation. Please be assured that we are here to help and support with any property or tenancy issues, so do contact us in the first instance to report any concerns.

We became aware of some issues with our lettings, allocations, and antisocial behaviour processes, so this has led to a restructuring of our Housing Team, so we now have dedicated officers for lettings and allocations and antisocial

behaviour. This has enabled focused resource in key service areas, which we hope will improve our service delivery, and ensure that our customers recognise that we are listening and responding to their feedback.

During the Christmas and New Year period, unfortunately we experienced some issues with our Out of Hours (OOH) service, with customers experiencing long delays getting through to report emergency repairs. Orbis is our current provider for this service, and they have advised that they experienced unprecedented demand, so we have conducted an internal review, and realise they were faced with exceptionally high incoming calls.

We are currently evaluating the OOH service as part of our on-going alignment work with Somerset Council.



Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 2025/2026



We're delighted to hit our benchmark on overall satisfaction for our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) for 2025/2026, with an overall satisfaction score of 84.2% from our customers.

We produce monthly TSM performance reports which show how we're performing.

We measure ourselves against the TSMs, which are set by the Regulator of Social Housing, as a system for assessing how well social housing landlords, including ALMOs like us, in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services.

This data helps us to identify our areas of strength and weakness. It enables us to identify areas of service which need to improve and ensures we can allocate resources accordingly.

All of our TSMs are published on our website.

Our latest results are:	2025/2026	Target
TP01 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord	84.2%	84%
TP02 Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service	84.6%	81%
TP03 Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair	86.3%	80%
TP04 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained	83.2%	80%
TP05 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe	86.2%	85%
TP06 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	73.5%	73%
TP07 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them	82.0%	80%
TP08 Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect	87.5%	85%
TP09 Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling	36.4%	41%
TP10 Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	77.2%	75%
TP11 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	74.4%	74%
TP12 Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling antisocial behaviour	63.8%	65%



Puzzle Time!



Enter our spring wordsearch.

Find all 16 words from the list, then return it along with the completed entry form.

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

BEACH

SUNSHINE

ICECREAM

SWIMMING

HOLIDAYS

SANDCASTLE

SUNGLASSES

LEMONADE

BARBECUE

FLIPFLOPS

PICNIC

CAMPING

BRIGHT

OCEAN

FIREWORKS

HEAT

Please complete your details for a chance of winning a **£25 voucher**.

Send your completed entry form to: Homes in Somerset, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater TA6 3AR, email customer.services@homesinsomerset.org or message us on Facebook.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Telephone:.....

**Deadline: Friday,
July 31, 2026**

Congratulations

To Sue, of Bridgwater, Lynsey, of Woolavington, and Dorothy, of Burnham-on-Sea, who were our lucky winners from our winter Puzzle Time. Enjoy your £25 vouchers.

Congratulations

To Jean, of Highbridge, and John, from Ashcott, who each won a £50 voucher for taking part in one of our surveys.



HomesinSomerset @homesinsomerset

customer.services@homesinsomerset.org

www.homesinsomerset.org 0800 585 360 / 01278 552400

Homes in Somerset, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater TA6 3AR

Don't forget to follow us on social media and check our website!

