# INFOCUS

Customer magazine

Autumn 2026
**Edition five**




## Creating a buzz with customers

**Page 6**

## Help improve services from your home

**Page 8**

## How to swap your home

**Page 10**

## Design our Christmas card

**Page 19**

Futures Housing Group

Welcome 2
My Voice 3
Highlights of our year 4
Everything you need to know about STAIRs 5
Meet your community champions 7
Help improve services from your home 8
How to swap your home 10
Planning for the future 12
You told us, we're listening 13
Test your boiler 14
Making changes to your home 13
180 new homes built in Derbyshire town 17
Puzzle time 18
Design our Christmas card 19


# Hello,

## Welcome to the autumn edition of your customer magazine.

This issue is full of ways you can help shape our services, and get rewarded for sharing your views too! From joining My Voice where you can earn points to swap for vouchers, to our new digital feedback panel where you'll be entered in quarterly prize draws for every piece of feedback you give.

You'll also find advice on making sure your boiler and heating are ready for the colder months, as well as information about swapping home your home, what customers told us at our summer roadshows, and your new Community Champions – if you haven't already seen them out in your community.

And because Christmas will be here before we know it, we're running a competition for children to design our Christmas cards this year, with three winners chosen across different age categories. We're really looking forward to seeing all the entries come through – good luck!

If there's something specific you'd like us to cover in our next magazine or you have a story to share, make sure you contact us as we'd love to hear from you.

Thank you,

**Tim Mulvenna**
Chief Executive





Futures Housing Group customer magazine | Autumn 2026

# It's easy to join, connects you with other tenants, and you get rewarded with points for vouchers!

## Don't just take it from us that our online community My Voice is worth signing up to – hear from customers using it!

> *"I like popping in and out to see what's new, read replies, and chip in where I can. It's easy to join, connects you with other tenants, and you get rewarded with points for vouchers. Great way to have your voice heard!"*
>
> **Paul, Heanor**

> *"It's nice to have a place where you can share your views. Not only with Futures, but with other tenants."*
>
> **Gail, Alfreton**

> *"It's good to leave my points of view and get involved in discussions. It's also good to earn rewards, I'm a regular contributor!"*
>
> **James, Spratton**

> *"I like to feel part of the Futures community. It's great to have the opportunity to put your points of view across, and that Futures use our input to help shape things in the future."*
>
> **Michele, Daventry**




### Signing up is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Go to www.futureshg.co.uk/myvoice
2. Pop in a few details to register
3. Fill in our new customer survey to earn points straight away

# Hello! Bonjour! Cześć!

If English isn't your first language then please make sure you let us know so we're communicating in the best way for you. We also work with an interpretation service, so if you call us and need to speak another language, we can easily get an interpreter to support.

### How to contact us

Call **0300 456 2531**

Visit **www.futureshg.co.uk/get-in-touch**



# Highlights of our year

**From improving homes and services, to supporting communities, and building for the future – check out some of our highlights from 2025-26 in our new customer annual report.**

This year we've made an annual report that's specifically for customers. Like most organisations we publish an annual report and financial statements each year, but we appreciate it's not the most of exciting read for everyone.

Our customer annual report has less of the technical stuff and shares the numbers and stories related to you, your home, and your community – including what we spend your rent on, events we've held for customers and some of the great things our tenants are doing too.

You can read the customer annual report now on our website at **www.futureshg.co.uk/publications**

Fancy a longer read? If the more technical stuff is your type of thing, you can still check out this year's annual report and financial statements on the same page too.

**40,750**
visits to customers' homes for repairs and work

**£1.49m**
additional income secured for customers

**23+**
new customer roles created









# Everything you need to know about STAIRs

**No, we're not suddenly very enthusiastic about the type of stairs you walk up and down – STAIRs stands for Social Tenant Access to Information Requests, and it's a new law set out by the UK Government to make it easier for residents to find out information about their housing association.**

The purpose of STAIRs is to make it easier for you, our customers, to access the information you need, be empowered to hold us to account, and have a better understanding of how we operate.

To do this we've made a new page on our website called a publication scheme – a one-stop shop that covers all the information we need to make available to you.

**Go to www.futureshg.co.uk/STAIRs now**

As part of STAIRs you'll now easily be able to find information about us in the following areas:

- ✓ Governance and decision making
- ✓ Finances and spending
- ✓ Housing stock management
- ✓ Performance
- ✓ Housing services and tenant liaison
- ✓ Lists and registers
- ✓ Social housing management

And if there's something you think we're missing, just let us know. There's an online form where you can contact us to request further information, and we'll be continuing to add to the page too.



# Creating a buzz with customers




**We held two drop-in events over the summer, giving customers a chance to ask questions, meet our teams, and take away a free bug house to build and decorate at home!**

We had a lovely time meeting customers in Northampton and Somercotes, where residents were able to ask questions about their home, community and green spaces in person, with the added bonus of taking home a free bug house to build and decorate for bees and ladybirds!

The event in Somercotes was held at Stanley Street, our largest new-build development to date with 180 homes! Read more about these new homes on page 17.

Thank you to all customers who were able to pop along and we're looking forward to getting more dates in the diary!

If you'd like to speak to us in person too, we regularly carry out estate walkabouts. Just go to **www.futureshg.co.uk/estate-walkabouts** to find your nearest one or leave feedback online instead.









# Meet your Community Champions

**We've welcomed our first group of customers as Community Champions, who'll be helping give a voice to their local communities and tell us what matters to their neighbours.**

Maggie, Niki and Sandra all bring different experiences but have a shared interest of doing their bit for their communities. Between them they're already bringing people together through coffee mornings, community trips, wildflower planting and ideas to brighten up spaces near them.

Niki said: "My friend came across this job and said I'd be perfect for it as I'm already doing the work! I like planting flowers in neglected spaces to add splashes of colour and hopefully lift people's spirits and mental health. The response from the public has been really heartwarming, I've had so much praise and encouragement!"

### Niki,
**Daventry (The Grange)**




Niki has already been busy improving her neighbourhood over the last few years, mainly by planting wildflowers to brighten up spaces. She's had lots of praise from her neighbours for this, and they've even donated plants and helped with watering them throughout the recent dry summer – so it was no surprise when her friend told her she'd be perfect for the role and to apply!

### Maggie,
**Heanor**




We recommended Maggie apply, as she's been successfully running community group Maggie's Den at one of our community centres for three years now, bringing people together for coffee mornings, crafts, meals and days out. Maggie loves meeting people and is looking forward to getting to know more about Futures and her local community.

### Sandra,
**Belper (The Fleet and surrounding area)**




Sandra loves where she lives and works and wants to see more done to improve it. She's already part of organising regular gatherings with neighbours and has helped improve a garden area.

**We're looking forward to seeing what the Community Champions get up to, and we'll be sure to keep you updated of their work and achievements!**

# Help improve our services from your home

**We're looking for customers to join our new digital feedback panel to influence decisions that affect our services, all from the comfort of your own home.**

You'll receive occasional emails inviting you to review documents such as policies, letters and other proposed business changes. And as a thank you for your time, every piece of feedback you provide will earn you an entry into one of our prize draws – with shopping vouchers up for grabs!

Each opportunity will have a deadline for responses, but you can choose which activities you'd like to take part in and complete them at a time that suits you. So if you're busy or away on holiday, don't worry, you don't need to respond to every request.

If you'd like to help us make sure we're making informed decisions based on customer feedback, then we'd love to hear from you!

Just fill in the form at the bottom of this page:
**www.futureshg.co.uk/influence**

## A chance to win

Every time you share feedback through the panel you'll get an entry into one of our prize draws for shopping vouchers! Some of our scrutiny workshops will count toward this too (you'll always be told if something you've done qualifies), so the more activities you take part in, the more chances you'll have to win.

Prize draws will take place quarterly, with the first draw on **27 November**. Each quarter one person will win a £100 shopping voucher and two people will win a £25 shopping voucher.

There'll also be a bigger Christmas prize draw, where one person will win a £250 shopping voucher and three people will win a £50 voucher. Any entries you earn during the year will automatically be included in the Christmas draw too.

Go to **www.futureshg.co.uk/feedback-prize-draws** to see the full terms and conditions.






Futures Housing Group customer magazine | Autumn 2026

# Help us with our website!

**Last magazine we asked for customers to help us with our website, so we could see if the pages on there are where you would expect to find them.**

We had a brilliant response to this, and the first two workshops we ran went so well that we'd love to run another.

To make it easier for more of you to take part, we're running the next workshop **in the evening** instead of during the working day, so more people can get involved.

The workshop will run on Tuesday 17 November, 5:30pm–7:30pm at Peveril Court community centre, Ripley, Derbyshire.

If you'd like to take part, please email **influence@futureshg.co.uk** and include your name, address and contact details. You can also send this to us in the freepost envelope with this magazine.

**As a thank you, you'll receive a £25 shopping voucher for completing the session!**







# How to swap your home

## Did you know you may be able to swap your home with another social housing tenant?

It's called a 'mutual exchange', and means you can apply to swap your home with another resident that lives in a housing association our council home.

Everyone's needs can change over time, so if you're looking for more room, want to downsize, or move to a new town, a mutual exchange could help you find the home that's right for you.

We've put together some frequently asked questions about the process.

### Can anyone swap their home?

As long as you're a social housing customer and have a secured or assured tenancy you should be eligible – check your tenancy agreement to confirm this or give us a call if you're not sure.

The person you swap with doesn't have to be another Futures customer. They can be a customer from any housing association or council.

### How can I find someone to swap with?

We recommend using a site called HomeSwapper, as it's completely free and we've worked with them for many years – although you can advertise your wish to mutual exchange almost anywhere, and there are other websites similar to HomeSwapper available.

Once you've registered with HomeSwapper, they let us know and we'll confirm within five working days that you're eligible. After then, your account will be up and running and ready to look for other homes!

### I've found someone, what next?

There's lots of guidance on HomeSwapper's website, but from our side, we need you and the person you're exchanging with to complete our online form – **www.futureshg.info/apply-mutual-exchange**

Once you've both completed the form, we'll start processing your application and get back to you with a decision in no more than 42 days. We know this might sound a long time to hear back, but there's lots of checks we have to carry out to make sure everything runs smoothly for you.



Futures Housing Group customer magazine | Autumn 2026



### Why might the application be declined?

Most mutual exchanges can go ahead, but there are some situations where we or the other landlord might not be able to approve the swap. This could be because of rent arrears, legal action linked to a tenancy, the home being too big or small, or not being suitable for your needs.

If the swap can't go ahead, we'll always discuss this with you and sometimes we may give you a conditional offer instead. So the swap could then go ahead if certain things have been sorted, like paying any owed rent or completing repairs that are your responsibility.

### Tips for swapping your home on HomeSwapper

- Add plenty of photos so people can see what your home looks like.
- Include the things you like about your home and neighbourhood – this helps to 'sell' your home.
- If possible, try to be flexible about the area and type of home you're looking for as it could give you more options.

### Questions?

If you'd like to speak to us about this, then it's best to let your Communities Housing Officer know. Call our Customer Services on **0300 456 2531** or go online at **www.futureshg.co.uk/get-in-touch**



# Planning for the future

**In the last magazine we shared the results of the 'help us plan for the future' survey, which more than 550 of you kindly completed for us.**

We also spoke with lots of customers about this at our summer roadshows (see next page on this). Your answers are helping us set our goals and priorities for the next few years in what we're calling our 'Futures Plan'. We'd usually call this a 'corporate plan', but corporate feels, well... very corporate. The plan is really all about you, your home, your community and the services you receive from us, so it made sense to get rid of the business jargon and call it what it simply is.

We'll launch the new Futures Plan in April next year, so we'll have lots more to share in our next issue. In the meantime we wanted to look back at a few things we said we'd do in our current plan and what's happened since.

## Futures Plan – coming 2027!

| What we said | What we've done |
|---|---|
| Customer feedback and insight will play a key role in shaping our work | We now have a dedicated Customer Voice team, focused on listening to customers and creating more ways for you to share feedback. |
| Achieve upper quartile scores for the Tenant Satisfaction Measures | We're in the upper quartile and scored 80.4% for overall customer satisfaction this year. |
| Achieve customer satisfaction with moving into a new home of more than 90% | We're currently scoring 94% for customer satisfaction with moving into a new home. |
| Make sure our services help customers with tenancy sustainment, employment and financial problems | We helped secure £1.49m in additional income for customers in 2025-26. |
| Reviewing and improving the customer journey | We've introduced a new way of working in our Customer Services team. If your question can't be answered on the same call, one team member will now deal with your query until it's fully resolved, so there's no passing customers between teams or having to ring and chase us. |



Futures Housing Group customer magazine | Autumn 2026

# You told us, we're listening

**After the ten summer roadshows we told you about in our last magazine, we wanted to share what customers told us and what we're doing in response.**

## Communal areas and grounds maintenance

**At almost every event, customers spoke to us about the upkeep and cleanliness of communal areas, as well as how often we cut the grass.**

*We've since increased inspections at our independent living schemes to check cleaning standards, and we'll also look at whether we can improve communal spaces and review our grounds maintenance service. We'll consider customers' feedback carefully throughout, alongside what's affordable and offers good value for customers – so while we may not be able to make every suggested change, we're exploring what is and isn't possible.*

## More community presence

**Some customers said they rarely see anyone from Futures and would like to see us more in the community, especially at independent living schemes.**

*We're restructuring our Communities team so we'll be able to give a more local service and help customers see the people that manage their home and communal spaces more often. More on this in the next magazine!*

## How we make decisions at Futures

**Customers often told us: "I reported it or enquired about this, chased a few times, but never heard back." Some had received different answers depending on who they spoke to and wanted decisions to be clearer and better explained.**

*This feedback also came through our 'help us plan for the future' survey and will help shape our Futures Plan – see previous page for more.*

## Mutual exchanges

**Customers told us about problems discovered only after moving through a mutual exchange. They suggested could make a simple checklist to help people make informed decisions before agreeing to an exchange.**

*We're reviewing our mutual exchange process to make outcomes and responsibilities clearer, using feedback from the roadshows and complaints.*

While we can't just say yes to every request, our ears are always open, and we're listening to everything that was shared with us at the events so we can see what's achievable, affordable, and good value for customers.

## Help us plan future events

Would you like us to run more events like this? Scan the QR code to tell us what type of event you would prefer, where you would like it to take place and what time of day would suit you best. Or pop your thoughts in the freepost envelope included with this magazine!

# Test your boiler

**With the clocks going back and darker mornings and nights on their way, many of us will be thinking about when it's time to switch the heating on – if you haven't already!**

When the temperature starts to drop we always receive a higher volume of calls from customers as they put their heating on for the first time. So if you haven't tested your boiler or heating yet, get ahead of our busiest time of year by taking 10 minutes now.

## To test your **boiler**:

- Turn the hot water thermostat to the maximum temperature. Make sure anyone in your household knows you're testing the boiler so they don't scald themselves.
- Run the hot water tap for a few minutes to allow it to heat up, being careful not to scald yourself. Remember, it can take a few minutes for hot water to come through if there is cold water sat in the pipe.
- If the water is coming through hot as expected, you can turn the thermostat back down to your usual setting.
- If the water is getting warm, but not warm enough, or not getting warm at all, report a repair by contacting our customer services team.

## To test your **central heating**:

- Turn up your thermostat to 'constant' and adjust it to the maximum temperature.
- Allow it to heat up for ten minutes or so.
- Once you're satisfied it's working, you can turn it back to your normal settings.
- If it's not working, report a repair by contacting our customer services team.




## If your **thermostat** isn't working:

- If your thermostat doesn't seem to be responding, change the batteries to a high-quality option. Lower quality batteries may not work effectively in your thermostat.
- Once the batteries have been replaced, test the thermostat again by amending a setting or switching your heating to constant. If it's still not responding as expected, report a repair by contacting our customer services team.
- If your thermostat is not battery-powered and you're still encountering issues, please contact our customer services team. Do not attempt to remove the programmer or any other heating control if it's mains powered.



Futures Housing Group customer magazine | Autumn 2026

The Help Hub

# ‘How-to’ videos for your home



**Did you know we have a library of short how-to videos showing you how to carry out easy fixes and repairs in your home?**

Available through our online Help Hub, the videos cover everything from isolating leaks and fixing blocked shower heads, through to informative videos about bleeding radiators and preventing damp in your home.

Search your question on thehelphub.futureshg.co.uk or scan the QR code to scroll through all the videos on our YouTube channel!

# Making changes to your home

**Feeling like you’re ready for a change at home? Whether you’re planning to install a driveway, fit an electric car charger or make changes to your kitchen, it’s important you check with us first.**

While there’s lots of improvements you can choose from to spruce things up, it’s always best to check before you change, as there’s some things we need to give permission for and add to our records.

For example, we need to know if you’re planning to:

- Change your cooker
- Switch from a shower to a bath
- Put up a shed
- Install a satellite dish

There are some things we unfortunately can’t give permission for, such as:

- Installing a range gas cooker
- Removing internal walls
- Loft conversions
- Installing patio, French or bi-fold doors

To find out what changes need permission and to submit a request, go to **www.futureshg.co.uk/alterations** or call us on **0300 456 2531.**



Futures Housing Group customer magazine | Autumn 2026

# 180 new homes built in Derbyshire town

**We celebrated the completion of our largest affordable housing site to date in Somercotes, Derbyshire this summer.**

The Stanley Street development, built in partnership with Miller Homes, has brought 180 affordable homes to the town, including 90 homes for social rent, 70 for shared ownership and 20 under the government’s Rent to Buy scheme.

The development includes a mixture of two-, three-and four-bedroom houses and two-bedroom bungalows, bringing much needed homes to couples and families in Amber Valley.

The homes have high energy performance ratings of A or B and come with solar panels, electric car charging points and thicker insulation, helping to make them more comfortable and affordable to heat.

Neil Laws, Head of Programme Delivery at Futures said: *“We’re very proud to have finished our largest affordable housing site to date, bringing 180 much-needed homes to Amber Valley.*

*“The development has been delivered in partnership with Miller Homes, and it’s fantastic to see our shared goal of delivering high quality, energy efficient homes become a reality. We’re also thankful for funding from Homes England, which helps us to keep bringing more affordable homes to local communities.”*



# Find the frights



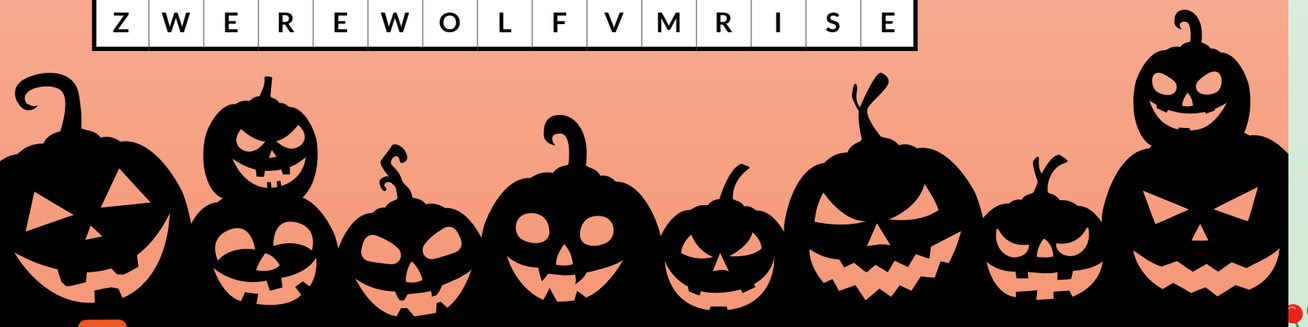
## Win a £100 shopping voucher!

One spooky Halloween word is missing from the wordsearch – can you spot which one?

Email your answer to **communications@futureshg.co.uk** or send it to us using the freepost envelope included with this magazine for your chance to win a £100 Love2Shop voucher. Email entries close **7 December**. Postal entries close **14 December**. For full terms and conditions go to **www.futureshg.co.uk/competition**.

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- PUMPKIN
- CAULDRON
- WITCH
- SPIDER
- GHOST
- VAMPIRE
- SKELETON
- FRANKENSTEIN
- WEREWOLF
- BROOMSTICK
- ZOMBIE
- TRICK OR TREAT





# Design our Christmas card!

**Little ones, get your crayons, pens and creative minds at the ready to design our Christmas cards.**

We're picking three winners for three age categories, and each winner will get a £20 voucher as well as their design used on our cards this year! Just pop this page in the freepost envelope that came with the magazine, and post back to us by 13 November so our elves can get them ready in time for Christmas.

Parents, grandparents, and carers, you must be a Futures customer for your young family member to enter. Age categories are 6 and under, 7-12 and 13-18. Please fill in your details so we can contact you if chosen. See terms and conditions at **www.futureshg.co.uk/xmascards**

**Child's first name and age:**

**Parent/carer/family member name:**

**Number or email:**

Futures Housing Group

## Our normal opening hours

**Monday to Thursday:** 08:30am – 5pm

**Friday:** 08:30am – 4:30pm


www.futureshg.co.uk/get-in-touch

0300 456 2531

@futureshousing

Futures Housing Group



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