

ENGAGE

AUTUMN/WINTER 2023



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Birthday Patrick!

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Foreword from CEO

Charmaine Simei



Welcome to this issue of Engage. As you know, we waved a fond farewell to the former CEO Richard Renwick MBE in September after 29 years of service. It's a great honour to become CEO at Tuntum, and I look forward to serving you all in the months and years ahead...although I am not sure I will make it to 29 years!

On page 4, you can read about my back story and, more importantly, find out how you can help inform my priorities over the next 12 months.

In this issue, we have a range of articles that we hope you find interesting and informative, including our annual report to tenants, which gives you a good overview of our performance over the last financial year.

Also, as we enter winter, we wanted to take this opportunity to raise awareness about our approach to Damp, Mould and Condensation, advising you on what we will do if you report any concerns to us, alongside some advice and guidance on simple preventative measures you can take. Find out more on pages 6 & 8.

If you have any ideas about the types of articles you would like us to include in future publications, please do get in touch; we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes,

Charmaine



Christmas working hours

Please note that our offices are closed from Friday 22nd December until 9am on January 2nd 2024 but staff are available on **0115 916 6066** and by email at the times below.

Monday 25 December

Tuesday 26 December

Wednesday 27 December

Thursday 28 December

Friday 29 December

Monday 1 January

Closed bank holiday

Closed bank holiday

9am - 5pm

9am - 5pm

9am - 5pm

Closed bank holiday

Our out-of-hours emergency repairs number is **0115 746 9664**.



Annual report to tenants

GREEN = target currently met.

AMBER = failed target but within tolerance levels

RED = failed target by more than 10%

Category	Target 2022/23	Performance 2022/23	Target 2023/24
General Needs Housing			
Current rent arrears	3%	3.07%	3%
Re-let times	Less than 21 days	18.6 days	21 days
Rent collection	100%	99.67%	100%
Voids	<1%	1.30%	1%
Tenancy turnover	<5%	2.88%	5%
No. of properties surveyed (over 10 years old)	100%	95%	100%
Specialist & Sheltered Housing			
Current rent arrears	3%	3.87%	4%
Rent collection	100%	102%	100%
Voids: Temporary Housing	<5%	4.47%	5%
Voids: Sheltered Housing	<3%	1.53%	3%
Health & Safety			
Current gas safety certificates (CP12)	100%	98.78%	100%
Safe water - (Legionella)	100%	100%	100%
Asbestos surveys - undertaken for properties built pre 2000	100%	40%	100% for all communal areas only
Undertake Fire Risk Assessments	100%	100%	100%
Reputation			
Overall satisfaction	80%	72%	80%
Repair satisfaction	77%+	70%	77%+
Formal complaints responded to on time	-	78%	-
Complaints Investigated by the Housing Ombudsman Service	-	2 (1.94% of total complaints)	-
Repair response times			
Emergency	100%	100%	100%
Non-emergency	100%	90%	100%

Meet the CEO

My background

I have worked in social housing and related fields for over half my life now, some 28 years.

I started on the front line, working with rough sleepers, young homeless people, and people struggling with substance abuse. I then moved on to manage services, including specialist, supported, general needs and sheltered housing, customer involvement and experience, and community investment.

I can honestly say that the thing that has sustained me throughout the years is knowing, on a personal and professional level, just how transformative good, affordable housing is; and whilst I know these are challenging times for all the public services, a strong and dedicated social housing sector will always play a pivotal role in the health of the nation.

In 2021, I was voted 'Professional of the Year' at the Women in Housing Awards, primarily for establishing the Community Investment arm at Longhurst Housing Association, which included a programme involving mental health, employment support, independent living, tenancy sustainment services and a hardship fund. At the time of my departure, the programme had delivered over 18,000 support interventions.

I am also a board member for Communities that Work, the national voice of housing providers who support residents and communities into employment.

My time at Tuntum

At the time of writing, I have been CEO for just a few weeks. It's been a rollercoaster, but I have loved every minute!

I have met many wonderful people and spent time shadowing our dedicated staff teams in their day-to-day roles, trying to



Meeting Merlita Bryan, former Sheriff of Nottingham, and presenting Trevor Edinborough with his Black Achiever's Award

understand their challenges so that I can know what they need to provide the best service possible to you, our customers.

I have met some of you also, but over the coming months, I will be able to get out and about even more on estate walkabouts and to scheme meetings so that I can hear your views directly.

Getting to know you, our customers

My priority is getting to know the Association; hearing the customer's voice is essential to that picture.

In line with that, I would like to invite customers to join some 'Meet Charmaine' sessions in January to discuss topics like what Tuntum does well. What could we do better, and how can we hear the customer's voice in every decision?

We will have limited numbers available at each session to ensure that we can have valuable conversations, but we will book more sessions if needed.

Tuesday 16th January - Tuntum's Head Office, New Basford from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Thursday 18th January - Online meeting from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Wednesday 24th January - Online meeting from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Please contact Christina Morgan-Danvers to request your preferred slot by email using christinamorgan-danvers@tuntum.co.uk or on **0115 916 6066**.



Meeting staff at the Breakfast Briefing



Out with the DTO doing repairs

Black History Month learning

Tuntum staff came together for a Lunch & Learn Session to celebrate Black History Month (BHM).

In the UK, BHM happens every October. It gives everyone the opportunity to share, celebrate and understand the impact of black heritage and culture.

Tuntum was set up over 35 years ago by community activists from the Windrush generation to provide quality housing and jobs for people primarily from the black Caribbean community in Nottingham. From these humble beginnings, the Association has significantly grown and diversified, maintaining its identity as a BME-led housing association.

Delores Vasell, our Head of Community Initiatives, gave a presentation and created an exhibition on two themes, 'Saluting our Sisters' which is the BHM national theme for 2023 and 'Meet the Founders', which is about the 7 founder's of Tuntum



The BBC came to Tuntum's Head Office to film the presentation and exhibition and interviewed Charmaine Simei and Barrington Billings for their Politics East Midlands show, which aired on the 29th October.

Charmaine said, "Black History Month is as relevant today as ever. Every year I learn something new. I'm hoping that in decades to come we wouldn't need to have a Black History Month because we all understand that we have all contributed to make the United Kingdom."

Happy 100th Birthday Patrick!

In October, we celebrated the 100th birthday of one of our tenants, Patrick, with a party.



Patrick has lived at Lyn Gilzean Court in St Ann's for 26 years since he had to leave his home on the island of Montserrat behind due to the eruption of Volcano Soufriere in 1995, which buried the capital in 12 feet of ash and killed 23 people.

As a colony of Britain, Montserratians are entitled to British citizenship. The British government announced that it would evacuate Montserratians to Britain. The CEO of Tuntum at the time, Richard Renwick, contacted Nottingham City Council to ask if any evacuees were coming to Nottingham and was told that a number of families were arriving. A welcoming committee was quickly established and under Tuntum's leadership, a plan was devised. By the time the first four of 20 families arrived, a warm welcome was awaiting them at Tuntum's sheltered housing scheme, Acacia Court, now



called Lyn Gilzean Court. Surrounded by his family and neighbours, Patrick enjoyed his birthday party, which was held in the scheme lounge. Fellow tenants, Monica and Chris, home-cooked a range of traditional Caribbean food for everyone to enjoy.

Patrick was delighted to have received a birthday card from King Charles III and Queen Camilla.

His wife of 39 years, Bernadette said the secret to his long and healthy life was staying active and busy.

The new CEO of Tuntum Housing, Charmaine Simei, came to meet Patrick and wish him well.

Laverne Dubois, the scheme manager said, "There's always a good atmosphere when our tenants get together, they really do look out for each other. It's been a privilege to have Patrick live here for so long."

Ask Christina...

Christina Morgan Danvers is our Customer Excellence Lead. She leads on how we learn from our complaints and respond to survey feedback. For each issue, she's going to answer one of your questions.

Question: Dear Christina, I am worried about getting damp and mould in my home; what should I do?



Answer:

At Tuntum, we take your health and safety seriously and always want to be the first to know if you have any concerns about the condition of your home. When you contact us to report problems with damp, mould or condensation, we will arrange for a surveyor to visit your home.



Our surveyor will then provide us with a report detailing whether there are any concerns, the location of the issue, and what they recommend we do to resolve the issue. We will then act on this report to arrange for the completion of the work. This could mean we arrange for the area to be cleaned with anti-fungal wash and painted with anti-mould paint, or we may advise you on how to manage the moisture level in your home.

We regularly send out information on how to recognise condensation and damp, and want to hear from you if you have any concerns.

Tenant Board Member vacancy

We have an exciting opportunity for a tenant to join our Board and make a meaningful difference to the running of our business.

The first responsibility of a Board member involves ensuring the well-being of the organisation, checking the company is complying with legal and financial requirements, ensuring health and safety, improving services for residents, managing risks and ensuring that we meet our objectives.

There will be opportunities for you to learn about new areas of work, to develop new skills and be part of a team which is passionate about the communities it serves.

The Board currently meets in person at least 5 times per year and the Customer Experience Committee meets three times per year over a video call. Meetings are held in the evenings from 6pm and reasonable expenses are paid.

The salary for the role is £3125 per annum. You can find out more about the role, the expectations and how to apply at www.tuntum.co.uk/careers

Please note that this role is only open to named tenants or joint tenants of Tuntum Housing.



Complaints Lessons Learnt



We recognise that to improve our services, we must listen to our tenants and learn from the complaints we receive. At the start of each month, our Housing Services Manager, Property Services Team Leader, and Specialist Housing Manager all meet with our Customer Excellence Leader to review the complaints we resolved in the previous month.

Here are some of the actions we have taken as a direct result of complaints we have received:

You said: It took too many visits to repair your boiler.

We did: We are working on a planned boiler replacement program so that our residents have boilers in good working order and we can obtain parts if they were to break down.

You said: We must show empathy when speaking to customers on the phone.

We did: We carried out Customer Services training for all our customer-facing staff.

You said: You were unhappy with the sanctions given to a perpetrator of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

We did: We amended our ASB and harassment policy to give clear timescales when responding to serious incidents.

You said: We must be mindful when investigating anti-social behaviour that we act impartially.

We did: We held a session with our Housing Officers to emphasise how to handle anti-social behaviour cases sensitively.

You said: We did not log your repair when you called in.

We did: All staff have been reminded on the importance of logging all repairs. We are going to embark on quality assurance checks in the new year to ensure we are getting this right.

You said: Your communal gardens are not being looked after.

We did: We met with our contractor and asked them to outline their plans, following this up with regular estate inspections.

Welcome on board!

At the Annual General Meeting in September, two new Board members were elected. Louisa Matthews and Julian Beaney have a wealth of experience that they bring to Tuntum's Board. You can read their profiles on www.tuntum.co.uk. In November, Louisa and Julian met some residents and visited schemes as part of their induction process. Thanks to all the residents who took the time to speak to them that day.



What is condensation?

Condensation often occurs in the colder months, as we ventilate our homes less in an effort to keep us warm. This can lead to a build-up of water vapour in your home, which may cause condensation.

You may recognise the following signs:

- Water droplets form on cold surfaces such as glass and paint
- Slightly damp wallpaper
- Development of moulds, usually black mould, which can form in areas where there is little air movement.

In some cases, condensation may be long-term but intermittent, forming only at certain times of the day or night. In these cases the only sign of condensation, may be mould growth, with water droplets evaporating during the day. The problem can occur well away from the site of most water vapour production. For example, water vapour produced in a kitchen may diffuse through the house into a cold bedroom where it will condense on cool walls and lead to mould growth.

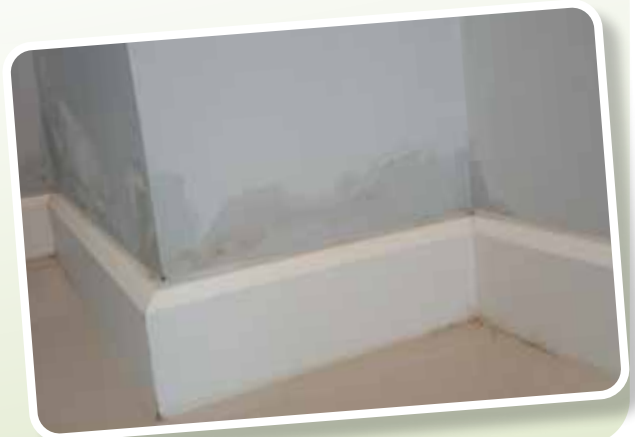
What can I do to minimise condensation?

- When cooking, cover pans and avoid leaving pots on the boil.
- Air-dry clothes outside, if this is not possible, put them in the bathroom, with the door closed and the bathroom fan on or leave the window open.
- It's important to make sure your home is properly ventilated. Do not block fixed ventilators such as air bricks or trickle vents on windows completely, when possible open windows for ventilation.



- When using the bathroom or kitchen, keep the door closed. To help ventilate, put the extractor fan on, or leave the window open. This will help to contain the moist or stale air in the room.
- Where furniture such as beds, cupboards and sofas are against the wall, try to keep a small distance between the back of the furniture and the wall. It's a good idea to ventilate cupboards to keep the air circulating.
- Wherever possible, particularly in cold weather, you should try to keep your home warm with some form of heating, even if you are not in the home.

If you have any problems with damp or mould, then please report it by calling **0115 916 6066** or report it through the MyTenancy portal.



Struggling to pay your rent?

Our Income Management team can support you if you are having difficulties paying your rent. We can also signpost you to other agencies that can provide support if you are struggling financially.

We understand the pressures to spend money at Christmas but you must ensure you pay your rent. We don't want anyone to risk losing



their home. If you have any difficulty making payments, contact the Income Team as soon as possible on 0115 916 6066 option 2. You can also check out the Money & Finances page on our website: **www.tuntum.co.uk**.

Fire Safety at Imaani House

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service came to visit Imaani House, which is a part of Specialist Housing, to talk to the residents about fire safety.

As well as having lots of fun, they gave out a lot of information about the causes of fire, dangers and precautions to take.

Each resident had the chance to look around the fire engine and the equipment the firefighter's use. They even got the chance to try on uniform.

One resident said:

"It was very informative. The firefighters left for an emergency and returned right after, which was



really good because they didn't have to return. After trying on the uniform I think I've found what I want to do in life and I have expressed an interest online."

The staff would like to run the fire safety training twice per year as they have a high turnover of residents, being temporary accommodation and want to ensure that everyone is safe.

Why do we ask security questions on phone calls?



When you call Tuntum, our advisors will ask you a few simple security questions to check who they're talking to, this includes things like your full name, address and date of birth.

Quite often on calls we'll be discussing personal information which can be of a sensitive nature. For security reasons, and to meet our General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines, we need to make sure that who we are talking to is the person they say they are.

The GDPR guidelines are there to make sure that our residents' data is being processed and used fairly and lawfully.

The cost of not letting us in

Part of the service we provide involves carrying out a range of safety inspections required by law, at varying frequencies, to keep tenants safe. We carry out gas servicing, fire door inspections and asbestos inspections every year, electrical testing every 5 years and in some cases legionella inspections every 3 months.

Unfortunately, there are occasions when our contractors arrive to carry out their work but cannot do so due to tenants not answering the door.

In some circumstances where we have been unable to gain access on several occasions we have no other option but to apply to the courts for an injunction to gain access. This is an expensive and lengthy process which can be quite easily be avoided.

So far this year we have spent £30,000 on injunctions to get access to properties to complete safety checks. Please work with our teams to allow them in when needed so that we can better spend this money, improving our homes and the communities we serve.



Colouring Competition Winner

Congratulations to 7 year old Poppy from Nottingham for winning our colouring competition! We loved the use of bright colours. We hope you enjoy your colouring set.



Staying Safe Online Whilst Christmas Shopping

For many, the urge to shop online over the festive period can be overwhelming. There are some simple things you can do to help protect your money and information while shopping online, including:

- Use retailers with a good reputation, such as well-known supermarkets, high-street shops, or established online stores.
- Beware of pop-up messages that warn you about a website's security certificate. They may direct you to a fake website that's designed to get you to hand over your details.
- If a deal looks too good to be true, it probably is, and be cautious of anything offered in an unsolicited email.
- Use the same card for all your online shopping. This way, it's easy for you to check the bank statement for this card regularly for any unusual transactions and contact your bank immediately if there's a problem.
- Use a credit card, rather than a debit card, for internet transactions. This offers you additional



protection – if your purchase costs more than £100 and you use a credit card, the seller and your card company are equally responsible if anything goes wrong.

- Consider using a PayPal account. This is an online account that you link to your bank account or payment card. It's secure and comes with more payment protection than a debit card. Click here to find out more about PayPal.
- You'll never be asked for your card PIN (Person Identification Number) when you pay for something online.

Complaints and the Housing Ombudsman Service



To comply with the Housing Ombudsman Service, we use the following definition of a complaint:

'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of a service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents'.

We encourage you to get in touch with us about anything you're not happy with as we can use this information to learn and understand where we've got things wrong and look to improve the situation.

You can get in touch with us by telephone on **0115 916 6066**, using the **MyTenancy** portal or in writing.

Complaints help us learn and understand where we've gone wrong. We can then change how we work to make sure we don't make the same mistake again. You also can trust us to take your

feedback and use it to make us better.

We recently updated our Complaints Policy. It's available on our website or, if you would prefer, we can send you a printed copy.

What to do if we're unable to resolve your complaint?

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time during the complaint process for help and advice on whether our actions are fair and reasonable. The contact details for the Housing Ombudsman Service are:

Online complaint form: **www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/residents/make-a-complaint/**

Phone: **0300 111 3000**

Email: **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

Postal address: **Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ**

Register for MyTenancy



MyTenancy is an online portal which provides you 24/7 access to your secure information and enables you to:

- View rent account details
- View repairs history
- Place repair requests
- Update personal information



USE THIS QR
CODE TO FIND
OUT HOW TO
REGISTER FOR
MYTENANCY.



Tackling Anti-Social behaviour

We all have the right to live in a safe and pleasant neighbourhood. That's why we take Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) seriously.

We aim to respond to reports of ASB within five working days, when our threshold is met or, for urgent cases, within 24 hours.

Remember, if you feel that you're at immediate risk, or if you are reporting a criminal offence, please contact the police by dialling 999.

How you can help

Most problems between neighbours can be sorted out privately before you make a formal complaint. Where appropriate, you can try to resolve the issue by talking to them in the first instance. The ASB Help charities' website, <https://asbhelp.co.uk>, has lots of useful suggestions on how to do this. If this isn't possible or doesn't work, please report the behaviour to us. Don't put yourself at risk.

If you are bothered by noise, then the **noise app** can help. You can use the free app to make audio recordings of the noise (up to 30 seconds) and enter details about the nature of the disturbance. This can then be easily shared with us to support your complaint. The audio clips are unlikely to be sufficient on their own to determine if the noise is a statutory nuisance, however, they can be very helpful in deciding your priority level and helping your complaint progress quickly. The app is available on Android or iPhone stores and is free.

How to report ASB to us

You can report ASB to us by:

- Completing the online form on www.tuntum.co.uk
- E-mailing housing@tuntum.co.uk
- Talking directly to staff members on estate visits
- Phoning **0115 916 6066**
- Through a third party (e.g. Councillor, friend or relative)

You can find out more about ASB, reporting it and our policies at www.tuntum.co.uk



Winter Puzzle

S			N
	N	W	
W			
	O		W



Directions: Each row must contain the letters to spell the word **SNOW**. Each letter can only appear once in each row or column. Complete the festive Suduko and email a photo of your answer to **ChristinaMorgan-Danvers@tuntum.co.uk** to be in with a chance of winning a £25 shopping voucher. Puzzle open to Tuntum residents only. Closing date 31st January 2024.

Summer Puzzle

Congratulations to the winner of the Summer puzzle who got closest to the correct answer of 23 rectangles and won a £25 voucher.

Useful Information

Experiencing Domestic Abuse?

Please contact the housing team and we can advise you on your housing situation.

You can also contact the National Domestic Abuse 24-hour helpline for free on **0808 2000 247** for support.

We want to hear from you!

Contact our Customer Excellence Lead if you want to join our scrutiny group, Magnify or if you simply want to give us feedback on a service that matters to you. Contact **ChristinaMorgan-Danvers@tuntum.co.uk**

Finding it difficult to pay your rent? Need help with Universal Credit?

Contact the Income Management Team for support on **0115 916 6066** (option 1) or email **housing@tuntum.co.uk**



If you would like this newsletter in another language or any other format, please contact us.

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SCAN ME