

SUPPORTING LIVERPOOL CITY REGION THIS WINTER

JANUARY 2023



Liverpool City Region Housing Associations (LCRHA) is an alliance of housing associations that collectively own and manage 100,000 homes across the City Region and directly employ more than 4,500 people. We work together to tackle the big issues facing our City Region where we believe joining forces with each other, and with partners, will benefit our residents and communities.

The purpose of this update is to tell you about some of the work we are doing this winter to help people with the cost of living, including helping customers make ends meet, as well as providing support in the community on food, warmth and loneliness. Collectively, we are delivering more than 150 projects on the cost of living across the Region. In this update, we spotlight just a few of the projects being delivered by our individual member organisations, to give you a flavour of what we are doing to support our residents and communities.

Damp and mould

We share the widespread shock and sadness at the avoidable death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, after prolonged exposure to mould in his family home. We acknowledge that the social housing sector as a whole must do everything we can to prevent a tragedy of this kind ever happening again.

Each LCRHA member organisation has responded to the recent request by the Regulator of Social Housing for more information on what we are doing to tackle damp and mould. If you would like to see a copy of any of these responses please contact your local housing association directly.

Liverpool City Region Housing Associations are committed to ensuring that our residents live in dry, warm and safe homes. As well as being committed to taking action now, longer term we are investing in improving our homes and building new ones that are more modern, comfortable and energy efficient for our residents.

Helping with the increasing cost of living

A snapshot of what some of our members offer.



Fuel Vouchers worth up to £147 are available to customers



Helping Hand Fund £500,000 for people facing crisis due to cost of living



Investing in homes through retrofit to make them more energy efficient



School uniform initiative helping families buy new and pre-owned uniforms in the Anfield area



£1.2m added to household incomes last year through advice



Helping people to stay in their home

- **Housing sustainment service**, support for those at risk of eviction, focus on safety and affordability.
- **New Advisory Service** on welfare, mental health and ASB, staying safe and healthy at home.
- **£200,000 Home+ fund** for new tenants facing hardship, white goods and furnishings.
- **£156,000 Live Well fund**, includes access to white goods, furniture, decoration vouchers.

Helping communities be resilient



- **£350,000 community fund** for locally-led projects that tackle poverty, boost wellbeing and promote employment opportunities
- **Food in the Community**: helping people access low cost, nutritious food and preventing social isolation

Case Study: Community Shop

Community Shop has opened stores in former housing offices in Wirral, Liverpool and Runcorn.

The shop provides low-cost food and essentials to members, who live locally and are in receipt of benefits to support food resilience. The Community Shop provides warm spaces for people to meet, eat, learn and socialise this winter. In addition Community Shop also offer spaces for partner agencies to engage with the local community and provide links to training and employment opportunities.



Case Study: Tackling homelessness

- Homelessness Reduction Project was a collaboration between housing associations, LCC, the Combined Authority and charities.
- More than 1,000 households were moved from temporary accommodation or rough sleeping into new homes.
- 94% of those supported through the scheme are staying in their homes long-term
- Our members continue to work with the Homelessness Partnership board to monitor success.

Case Study: Digital inclusion

In today's digital age, everybody should have the opportunity to learn the basic skills required to use a computer, smartphone or laptop. Some of our members have tailored programmes to help residents:

- Get basic skills.
- Improve existing skills.
- Use a computer smartphone or tablet.

Support is tailored to the level of skill and experiences of each person. A friendly and patient approach is guaranteed so people can:

- Be confident online.
- Access online Universal Credit support.
- Find out how to send and receive emails.
- Access Universal Job Match Training.
- Create or update a CV.
- Make and receive video calls to stay connected with friends and family.
- Access online services such as prescriptions and GP appointments.
- Use social media safely.
- Save money by shopping around for the best deals.

The Digital and Employment Teams are also working together to deliver Digital Job Hubs across communities. Informal and friendly sessions provide participants with the opportunity to work at their own pace to build IT skills. If needed, participants are also offered support with online job searches, creating CVs, applications and more.



Case Study: Warm Hubs

Members have joined forces with partners in the community to open up warm hubs for local people, giving them the chance to relax in a warm space, come together to forge connections and join in activities. Often there are complimentary hot drinks and light hot snacks available too. These spaces are a lifeline for people to enjoy a warm place and understand that they are not alone in these challenging times.

Member organisations have always provided an extra helping hand at Christmas, but this year they have gone that extra mile, working with partners to make a difference to residents who may be struggling with seasonal pressures and the cost of living crisis. It is made possible through the support of our partner organisations and contractors, who have given generously to help provide everything from food parcels and children's toys, to social events and warm hubs.

Households have received tailored assistance, including food and toy hampers, food bank vouchers and help with energy costs.

We have also provided customers with slow cookers to help them make low-cost, nutritious meals.



A word of thanks

Mrs G describes the support received from one of our members



I am writing to say how amazing Lee has been in sorting out my very worrying financial issues and problems.

I was very, very wary about accepting any form of support, partly because of my own pride but equally and more importantly because of abuse experienced in the past.

Lee built up my trust and has been truly fundamental in helping me to rebuild my life. I am sure that, without his support and knowledge, I could easily have lost my home and certainly would not be in a position to be able to enjoy my new downsized house and look forward to a brighter future.

Words cannot express how much gratitude I have. Lee supported me without making me feel inadequate or stupid. I was extremely concerned and very doubtful he could help me. Those fears though, over the last few months, have been completely washed away.

