



Futures in focus



Welcome to your summer edition of **Futures in focus.**



We're hope you're enjoying being able to spend more time out and about. This edition is focused on all things neighbourhoods.

We want to raise awareness of the amazing work our neighbourhoods team do to help our customers. They help with all sorts of issues – from problems with antisocial behaviour and support with community projects through to helping people to access the services they need – and we're so proud of the committed and hardworking team we have at Futures! Feel free to say hello if you see them out and about – they'll be happy to meet you!

We're also looking at one of our communities which has embraced their wildflower meadows, and giving you an

update on one of our key corporate plan objectives – sustainability.

You might notice some fab photos we've featured in this edition – and for them, we'd like to say a big thank you to Lia Joynes, who has been undertaking work experience with our PR & Communications team ahead of starting her degree in photography in September.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Futures in Focus. If you've got a story you think we should feature in the future, feel free to email communications@futureshg.co.uk and we'll be happy to take a look.

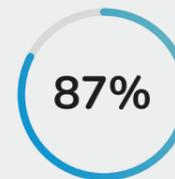


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How are **we** doing?



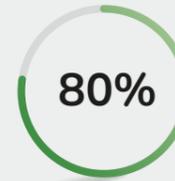
Each quarter we run customer relationship surveys, where independent researchers contact customers from across our network to see how we're performing across our services. We're thrilled to see our satisfaction scores continuing to rise, and that we've managed to stay on the up despite the pandemic. These results are very important to us, and they really do inform the way we offer our services.



87% are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live



77% are satisfied with Futures overall



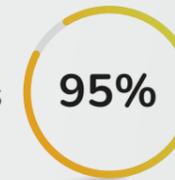
80% say we're easy to deal with



86% think our contact centre team is helpful



87% say our contact centre team members are professional



95% are happy with the service provided by one of our operatives.

While we're really proud of the results we see from our surveys, there's always room for improvement. We're keen to know your thoughts about Futures and all our customers are invited to join MyVoice, our community platform – so you can have your say on how we can do better and make a difference to our services.



To find out more about how you can get involved, visit: futureshg.co.uk/our-services/get-involved/

Spotlight on... neighbourhoods

At Futures, we're proud to have a friendly, approachable neighbourhoods team who are here to support you to manage your home and enjoy your community.



They're a key part of our Futures family who can help with all sorts of things to make sure you can stay safe and happy in your home.

They're around at all stages of our customer journey – helping you to sign up to your property when you first join us, supporting you to manage your home and facilitating the process when you're ready to end your tenancy.

But what else does a neighbourhood officer do? In this edition, we're looking at a day in the life of a neighbourhood officer and shining a light on some of the amazing and life changing work they do.



Say hello to Lisa



We're talking to Lisa, part of our neighbourhoods team in the Derbyshire area, who has been working with Futures for 18 months.

The most exciting thing about my role is that I don't really have an average day – it's a really varied job and no two days are the same. Three or four days a week I'm visiting customers in their home, and then I aim to have a day for catching up on paperwork and admin tasks at least once a week. A typical day might start with me doing a viewing of a property or signing up a new customer so they can move into their new home, and then heading off to another customer to check whether they have removed rubbish from their garden or have resolved an issue

with their neighbour. Sometimes I'll be working alongside another agency, like the Environmental Health team at the local council, particularly if there's an issue that's affecting other residents in the area, like someone keeping unusual animals, for example. Then after a quick lunch break and a check of my emails and voicemails, I'll be off again to another customer, maybe to help them assign their tenancy to an ex-partner after a relationship breakdown or doing a welfare check to make sure someone has all the support they need.



It's part of my job to refer people to other services, so at any point in the day I might make a referral to social services, a local GP, or our money advice and employment advice teams. I also support with things like investigating abandoned properties and attend multi-agency meetings to discuss cases I'm involved in.

As you can imagine, I have to be really organised but stay flexible, as I might need to drop what I'm doing to deal with an urgent situation in one of our homes. My favourite part of being a neighbourhood officer is getting to support our customers who struggle to access services. In the past I was an independent domestic violence advisor and I have a real passion for this kind of work, which really helps people to have a better life and thrive in their communities. I think sometimes people see our roles as just there to make people stick to the terms and conditions of their tenancy – or taking people to court and starting legal action! But it's not like that at all. Our roles cross into health and social care, counselling, law enforcement and all sorts of other areas! I've always worked with the general public, starting in the control room of Nottinghamshire police and

moving through various roles supporting people, particularly those who had severe mental health issues or who had been victims of crimes. I'd love to specialise even further in my role so I can focus on domestic violence and vulnerability, to provide intensive support to the customers who need it. A piece of advice I would give to our customers, is that your neighbourhood officer is here to help and support you – no matter who you are or what the problem is. If we can't help or don't have the answer to your question, we'll find out who does.



I promise we're not that scary, so get in touch if there's something we can help you with!

Make a stand



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Lisa is also one of our domestic abuse champions at Futures. We're proud to be a part of the 'Make a Stand' campaign which involves us pledging to support people who experience domestic abuse. She provides advice and support to any member of staff who has concerns that someone might be experiencing domestic abuse and works directly with customers to make sure they have a safety plan and know where to go for support.

Futures is committed to supporting those who experience domestic abuse –

Lisa is our specialist in our north region, and we also have a specially trained member of the team for our homes in the south.

There's lots we can do to support our customers, from advocating for customers with other agencies, to practical things like changing locks and installing window alarms. It can be scary to start the journey of leaving an abusive situation and our team are here to help make our customers feel safe in their homes.

If you think you or someone you know might be at risk of domestic abuse, please speak up. Contact our customer services team and ask to speak to a domestic abuse champion – they will be able to put you in touch with the right person for your area to get the support you need.



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Things to look out for



Is someone trying to keep you away from your friends and family?



Are you constantly belittled, humiliated, criticised or insulted?



Are you being prevented from studying or going to work?



Do you feel you're constantly walking on eggshells?



Does someone constantly check up on you or follow you?



Are you afraid of someone close to you?



Have you been forced into sex, or to perform sexual acts that you haven't wanted to?



If you answered yes to one or more of the above questions, you may be experiencing domestic abuse. Don't forget, domestic abuse can happen to anyone, and there's no one type of abuser. They might be a romantic partner, parent, child, or friend. No matter who you are or who is abusing you, we are here to support you.

Visit our website for more information and signposting to charities who might also be able to help: futureshg.co.uk/our-services/domestic-abuse/

Useful resources:

Help for women: The National Domestic Violence Helpline (**0808 2000 247**) is run by fully trained female support workers and volunteers. All calls are free and most will not show up on your phone bill (you can double check this with the team if you're concerned). nationaldahelpline.org.uk/

Help for men: The Men's Advice Line (**0808 801 0327**) is a confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner, ex-partner or family member. Calls are free and do not appear on itemised bills. mensadviceline.org.uk/

Help for LGBTQ+ people: Galop is an anti-violence charity for the LGBTQ+ community combating hate crime, sexual violence and domestic abuse. You can call them on **0800 999 5428**. galop.org.uk/

General support: Victim Support is an independent charity dedicated to supporting victims of crime and traumatic incidents in England and Wales. They have a 24 hour support line that you can call on **08 08 16 89 111**, or you can use the live chat on their website. victimsupport.org.uk/

Let's talk about sustainability



At Futures we are in it for the long-term. Thousands of people depend on us for a safe, comfortable and affordable home where they can settle and build their lives.

We employ around 400 people and leave our mark on the landscape by building and managing homes and neighbourhoods across the region. We want to have a sustainable future to make sure we are there for the people that need us, today and tomorrow. As part of our corporate plan we've committed to improving our environmental sustainability, working

with our partners and customers to work towards a zero-carbon future. We're also committed to supporting our customers to make the changes that will protect our community and our planet for longer. Watch this space for regular updates about our work on sustainability, and useful hints and tips on making the most of your home.

For more information about the work we're doing around sustainability, visit: futureshg.co.uk/corporate/sustainability/

Blooming lovely scenes in Ironville!

We've been working with our communities to make the most of spaces on our estates. We've been working with Team Ironville, a crew of local people led by resident Pete Clark, to improve the appearance and biodiversity of the village. Team Ironville is keen to help out their friendly neighbourhood pollinators and have created a special 'butterfly zone' using 75 seedlings of wildflowers that are attractive to butterflies like the Orange Tip, Small Copper, Common Blue, and Dingy Skipper. The spaces they're using to plant were previously unusable due to rubble piling up, so it's a great opportunity to make beautiful, interesting and environmentally friendly habitats for creatures that help to sustain our ecosystem and give plants a helping hand with reproducing.



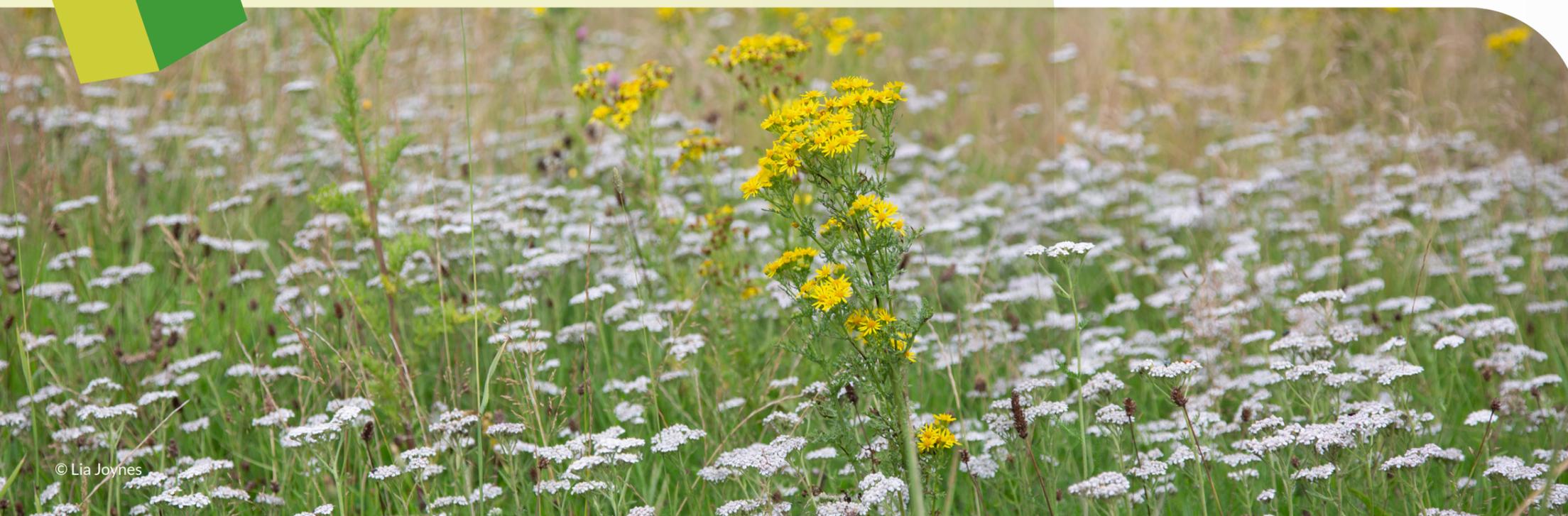
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Digital update

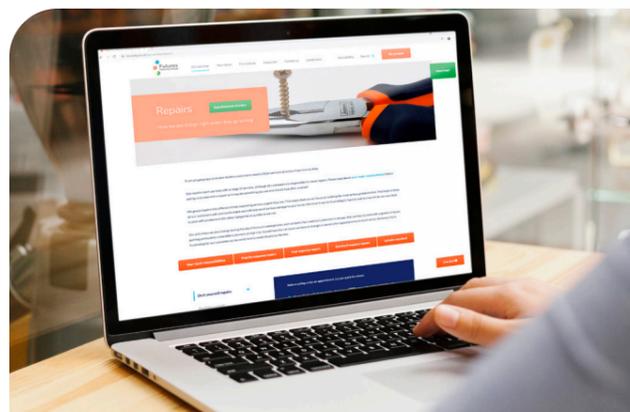


We're excited to introduce our new interactive repairs checker, a virtual assistant which can help you find out the status of your repair 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

With just your postcode and the first line of your address, our intuitive virtual assistant will check our records and let you know the date and time of your appointment so you can get it straight into your calendar, as well as which team is looking after it.

Have a question about your appointment? Not a problem. Our chat bot is also integrated with our live chat system, so if you still need more information it can connect you with one of our customer service advisors during office hours. They'll already have the information you've entered to find your repair, so it'll be quicker and easier for them to support you there and then.

When they're not available, you'll still be able to connect into MyAccount to cancel your appointment if it's not convenient. It's really exciting to be launching the next stage of our digital journey, and in time we're going to roll out more and more functions to the chat bot to make things easier for our customers. We still love talking to you and are there on the other end of the phone if you need us, but this, along with our other digital systems, means you can get a response to the easy questions at a time and place that suits you, and frees up our friendly team to help with the more complex queries that need a personal – and human! – touch.



OUR DIGITAL JOURNEY

For more information on our digital journey you can visit the digital hub on our website: futureshg.co.uk/our-services/digital-hub/

You can also keep an eye out for our autumn magazine, which will be focused on **all things digital!**



Futures Housing Group



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