


Thorngate Churcher Trust
HOUSING AND CARE SINCE 1868

ThorngateLiving

Annual Report 2025



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Introduction



Our Mission

Providing comfort and security to those in need since 1868 and committed to developing the highest standards of housing and professional care in a supportive, respectful and friendly community.

Our Values



We seek to improve lives through passionately promoting excellence in support, care and housing.



We strive to be transparent, approachable, listening to each other and acting with empathy and consistency.



We will each commit to take responsibility for our role in our teams encouraging, respecting and supporting each other.



We will respect and support everyone as individuals, treating residents and colleagues with dignity and compassion, behaving professionally whatever our role.



Chairman's view

Mark Hook



In the last twelve months we have seen, as in previous years, some excellent developments across both the housing and care

provision operations of Thorngate Churcher Trust and I continue to be very proud of our fantastic team.

I am delighted to have been reappointed in my role as Chairman of the Board this year and I would also like to say thank you to fellow board member Reeta Ram, who has recently resigned from her position as trustee. Her support and insight have been invaluable and I wish her the very best for the future.

During the year, your board members have continued to support the executive, housing and care staff to provide the very best housing, care and support to our residents. We do this through working together to ensure the organisation is being run in the best possible way and making the best use of resources available. As a group, we hold regular educational board days throughout the year, ensuring that we remain up to date with our responsibilities in line with housing and Care Quality Commission regulations.

One key focus for the board is to ensure the facilities we provide for residents, both in our retirement homes and at Russell Churcher Court care home, are high quality and support people to live well. You'll see from the comments from some of our residents and staff later in this report that we are consistently meeting this goal, though we are never complacent about it.

We have continued to make progress this year in the refurbishment of rooms in Russell Churcher Court, as well as in the development of 30 new properties at Grove Road in Gosport. Despite some challenges through the project, this new site will provide some much needed homes for local people. I have visited the site myself to see the excellent progress being made by our colleagues at Vale Southern Construction and I look forward to seeing the properties when they are completed later in 2025.

I want to thank the other members of the board for their support of me and the organisation in the past year, and I'd like to say a special thank you to our Chief Executive,

Anne Taylor, who continues to go above and beyond in her role and provides a strong leadership presence for everyone at Thorngate Churcher Trust.

"There are many exciting opportunities in the coming 12 months, and I wish you all a prosperous year ahead."

Chief Executive's view

Anne Taylor



Writing this message always gives me the welcome opportunity to reflect on the previous 12 months; it's been a year of

some challenges and many successes. The teams across all areas of the trust have continued to show dedication in their various roles, supporting our residents with care and maintaining the strong sense of community that sets us apart.

One of my favourite parts of this report is sharing the stories of staff and residents, and this year we have an excellent selection which includes residents from Russell Churcher Court, from our retirement homes, and some heartwarming comments from the daughter of a lady who lived in Lucas Court. To see the impact our work has on people shared in this way makes me feel incredibly proud of the work we do.

I am delighted to share that we have recently been recognised for our work at a national level, having been named as one of the Sunday Times' Best Places to Work for 2025. This prestigious title is awarded based on responses to a workplace survey on employee engagement, carried out by WorkL. This award is well deserved recognition for the hard work of all our teams, and of our commitment to creating a supportive and welcoming work environment – in fact, our responses to the survey even

earned a WorkL triple star award on top. It truly is a fantastic achievement!

And that's not the only award our staff and residents have received this year – in the 2024 Gosport in Bloom awards, our residents scooped a remarkable 21 awards across the different categories, recognising how our community works together to create beautiful and diverse outdoor spaces. There's been a lot of work going on to ready our gardens for the 2025 awards as we hope for another clean sweep!

In October 2024, Hollie Hall, Deputy Care Manager at Russell Churcher Court, was named in The Care Show's prestigious Thirty Under 30 list for 2024, a programme highlighting young talent in the care sector and celebrating future leaders. In March 2025, the catering team that is based at Russell Churcher Court and serves care home residents and caters events across all our sites, once again achieved the highest possible food hygiene rating following a comprehensive inspection by the Environmental Health Office.

One of the things that makes me so proud of what we do at Thorngate Churcher Trust is creating an environment where our residents can build relationships and thrive, and the results were evident as we all celebrated VE Day. In the care home, residents sang songs, sat together in remembrance to share their memories of war time and enjoy a fish and chip lunch together.

In the atrium at Lucas Court, a long trestle table was set up to cater for a group of residents from all our sites as they joined for a celebratory afternoon tea, complete with bunting and individual trifles made especially for the occasion.

Our retirement properties have a long waiting list which reflects the urgent need for new and affordable housing in the Gosport area, and after many years of planning it will be a special day when we can open 30 new properties at Compigne Court, our new site in Grove Road, later this year. Construction work began in April 2024 and I have been pleased during my regular visits to see these new almshouses take shape as modern retirement homes for local people.

Social care has maintained its place in national headlines throughout the past year, and though there have been

continuing pressures on the sector, such as the changes to national insurance contributions announced in 2024, we have maintained our position as a Real Living Wage Employer and made sure we continue to provide an excellent place to work and live for our staff and residents.

Part of my role is also to promote the work we do within the housing sector, and in March 2025, we welcomed chief executives from housing associations across the country in a two day event held in collaboration with CESSA Housing Association. Alongside the day-to-day activities of the trust, these opportunities to meet other housing leaders, develop ideas for the future and share insights and best practice are invaluable to ensure we continue our great performance in housing and care delivery, as well as showcasing the excellent work we do.

As ever, there is much to look forward to in the year ahead and I'd like to thank the Thorngate Churcher Trust Board, our staff and residents for helping make the charity such a joy to be a part of.

THE SUNDAY TIMES
**Best Places
to Work 2025**
MEDIUM ORGANISATION



About Thorngate Churcher Trust



Our year in numbers*



157
years operating
as an almshouse
charity



In excess of
£3.9m
annual turnover



30
new homes
due for completion
in 2025



9.7
our average score
out of 10 based on
carehome.co.uk
reviews



84
people
employed
by the trust



1
Sunday Times
Best Place to
Work award

We are members of



Resident Stories

At Thorngate Churcher Trust, we come to work every day to help ensure our residents can live safely and comfortably, enjoying as much independence as they choose in a welcoming and community-focused environment. Here, we are pleased to share some of their stories.

Lorraine and Michael Dewey

Lorraine and Michael Dewey have lived in Clare House since February 2025, having previously been in rented accommodation for a number of years, and after a period of settling in Lorraine says they are very happy now. *"Our previous landlord often spoke of selling our rented property and we lived for years with the worry of losing our home, but now I feel completely secure and it's made such a big difference. I just love it here!"*

The couple are both familiar with the local area, having lived in Gosport all their lives, and they both have family who live nearby and visit, including three grandchildren. *"Everyone is so friendly and helpful, nothing is too much trouble,"* Lorraine continued, *"I care for Michael so neither of us work anymore and I've been able to go along to a few of the events here, like the coffee mornings, stretch classes and to see a few singers. It's been nice to feel so welcomed by everyone."*



"Everyone is so friendly and helpful, nothing is too much trouble."

Lorraine Dewey

Jeanette Wilde

Jeanette Wilde has spent 14 years living at Thorngate Court and has seen the trust change in that time, though she says the change has been positive. *"It really is lovely here and the wardens are too. They help residents with lots of different things and they make us feel safe."*

Having worked as a cleaner for many years, Jeanette was happy to help when one of her neighbours asked her to help with some cleaning and she's always had two or three residents she has cleaned for. *"Doing a bit of cleaning keeps me going,"* she explained, *"and when I've finished I'll always sit and have a chat so it's quite social too, it's a nice way to see some of my neighbours regularly."*

Jeanette was born in Gosport and moved to the Isle of Wight for a time, but then moved back after her husband passed away and she loves the area. Living at Thorngate Court means she can stay social as she gets older and she said: *"There is a lot going on but there's no pressure, it's up to you to choose what you are interested in. I love to go to the bingo every Friday!"*

In memory of Pat Bateman

Pat lived in Lucas Court for around three years before she passed away in April 2025, and her daughter Margaret sent cards to wardens Lance Campling and Laura Gillin to recognise the care and support they showed for her Mum.

Margaret said, *"After we lost my Dad, Mum stopped going out as much and I was worried she would become isolated, but after she moved to her flat Lance and Laura were brilliant with her. They showed exceptional care, compassion, humility and most of all honesty during my Mum's time at Lucas Court and I have appreciated all the open communication. Their kindness will not be forgotten."*



*"The wardens
help residents...
and they make
us feel safe."*

Jeanette Wilde

Our people



Building a strong team

Our warden team is a key part of our housing operation, providing vital support to residents no matter what they need. They act as a signposting service, they liaise with other trust services to ensure the homes run smoothly, they manage events and encourage social interaction, and sometimes just provide a friendly ear to listen. A key part of being a warden is understanding the need for flexibility and providing an equity in access to support, because every resident's needs are different.

Lance Campling

Lance has been a warden since September 2021 and answers easily when asked what his favourite part of the job is. *"No two days are the same and it's fulfilling to have such a variety in the work I do."*

Lance enjoys connecting with residents and supporting them to come together and socialise. He told us that a highlight of the last year was arranging a fitness class, a simple concept that took a long time to organise in getting the right people together but had a huge impact, providing a widely enjoyed class that lots of residents took part in.

"No two days are the same and it's fulfilling to have such a variety in the work I do."

Lance Campling

Jayne Hunt

Jayne has been working for the trust for around seven years, having tried to retire and returned to her role! She started as a relief warden and, after a short spell of spending her days on the golf course, she rejoined the team providing her with a fixed working pattern that means she can balance her time supporting residents with getting in her golfing practice.

Jayne now works alongside warden colleagues Chris and Jamie, and says, *"I am enjoying the team camaraderie and work ethic between us all. I also enjoy the interaction with the residents and being there to help and support them as needed."*

Jayne is a committed team member and during staff shortages she volunteered to cover many shifts to make sure that the residents and the buildings were supported, to maintain the safe and secure environment Thorngate upholds.

Jamie Mark

Jamie started working as a warden for Thorngate Court in August 2024, bringing experience from a role as a support worker for vulnerable adults. He said, *"I absolutely adore my job; the fact I get paid to do it is a bonus! I can't wait to come in each morning to see what the day will bring. As a keen advocate for positive mental health, I love spending time with the residents and supporting them with practical - and sometimes emotional - support. I find it very fulfilling to know that I've made someone's day just a little bit brighter."*

Over the last year, Jamie has enjoyed learning about how the housing sector works and how his role fits into that, as well as exploring options for more events among the Thorngate community to encourage more residents to get involved in different social activities. As he told us, *"There will be lots of things happening in the next 12 months!"*

Laura Gillin

Laura is relatively new to the team, having joined in September 2024, but her relaxed and friendly nature means she's quickly settled in with both staff and residents. She told us that her favourite part of the job is 'getting to know our wonderful residents and working with such a fantastic team' – connecting with a large variety of people on a daily basis and supporting residents to live well.

Laura's been busy in her first year with the trust and is quick to get involved in activities happening across the organisation, which is why one of her colleagues nominated her for a staff award for always being willing to help others alongside her regular duties. When asked what her highlights have been since starting in her role, Laura said: *"I loved the VE Day street party, which brought so many different residents together to share in the celebration, and I also enjoyed the Christmas quiz because my team won!"*

"I absolutely adore my job; the fact I get paid to do it is a bonus!"

Jamie Mark



Chloe Lind

Chloe has been working for the trust for three and a half years as a cleaner based mainly at Elizabeth Court and Thorngate Court, and in the last year she has also been working as a relief warden, working across all our sites depending on where support is needed. Chloe said, *"I love seeing the residents and now that I am a warden it means I get to spend more time with them."*

Chloe particularly likes connecting with people and helping them to enjoy their lives in whatever way they choose. The sense of community we encourage here at Thorngate Churcher Trust is an important factor, and Chloe told us, *"The joy and laughter that I have experienced with our residents since I started working as a warden have definitely been a highlight for me."*

Chris Wright

Chris is the longest serving of our wardens, having been in the role for almost nine years. As so many of her warden colleagues told us, Chris loves her job because every day is different – she is able to support a wide range of residents live well and remain independent through helping them with routine challenges around the home, connecting them with other residents and arranging social activities.

Chris took two months off in 2025 to go and spend time with her daughter, who lives in New Zealand. She said, *"I had a fantastic trip and I was very grateful to the trust and my colleagues for covering my responsibilities while I was away. It's a great team."*

"I love seeing the residents and now that I am a warden it means I get to spend more time with them."

Chloe Lind

Thorngate Living

Building strategy



Energy and environmental strategy

Energy efficiency and sustainability remain key priorities in our commitment to providing modern, warm, and safe homes for our residents. We continue to focus on improving in these areas as part of our long-term strategy.

We previously reported that all our homes achieved an Energy Performance Certificate rating of C seven years ahead of the government's target, and we are actively working to maintain this standard while advancing our broader sustainability goals.

In some instances, the changes we implement are significant; in others, they are smaller, incremental steps. Together, they all contribute meaningfully to reducing our overall carbon footprint.

During the year we have continued our planned refurbishment of residents' rooms at Russell Churcher Court care home and installed new kitchens for residents who wanted them in Bagot House, Melrose Gardens and Clare House. As part of these programmes, we have ensured that new units contribute to improving our energy

Digital strategy

During the year the trust has progressed with its digital development in a number of ways.

We have delivered a project to provide free wi-fi in all our housing properties, giving all our housing residents the opportunity to be digitally connected. This will also enable the trust to utilise the latest sensor technology in its building management in due course, and prepare for the digital switch off of phone lines, when wardens will start to use the latest call units. This project was completed in the summer of 2025.

Our utilisation of our own data has continued in both our care and housing services and as well as monitoring call bell responses, we added repairs feedback and efficiency of various other areas of our organisation to our Power BI enhanced reports.

Estates strategy

In April 2024, construction began on 30 homes at our new Compigne Court site in Grove Road, carried out by Vale Southern Construction. These new properties will be a welcome addition to the area and have been carefully designed to prove warm and welcoming homes that include sustainable elements and all the key features we know our residents value, such as a multi-use space in the resident lounge, easy access for buggies and parking, and great transport connections. The homes are due for completion later in 2025.

During the year, we have also carried out a fire prevention programme at our existing properties in Thorngate Court and Elizabeth Court, undertaking improvement works that ensure our homes meet high safety standards for our residents.

We have also carried out work to retrofit every one of our 124 flats with a data point and to install wi-fi, delivering consistent access to the internet for all residents. We regularly review plans for improvements to our homes as well as responding to feedback and ideas from residents to collectively ensure we are providing a modern and safe environment to live in.

"I have been pleased to see these new almshouses take shape as modern retirement homes for local people."

Anne Taylor,
Chief Executive



Highlights from Russell Churcher Court



Hear from our staff and residents

Beatriz Granell-Macias

Bea has worked at Russell Churcher Court since September 2024 and has loved every minute. She said, *"Being part of the team has been a rewarding experience, and I feel fortunate to contribute to the positive environment at Russell Churcher Court."* Bea works as the Data and Compliance Manager, which includes creating and reviewing care plans, conducting risk assessments, carrying out audits and coordinating with social workers and other healthcare professionals to ensure residents' needs are identified and met.

Bea continued, *"I take great satisfaction in making sure that each care plan is tailored to meet the specific needs of our residents and I love identifying opportunities for growth through audits, which means we can improve how we operate as a whole team."* She has worked to build strong relationships with all staff and residents at the home to ensure everyone feels heard, supported, and confident in the care we provide.

Bea said that one of her highlights from the past year has been the trust and freedom she's had on her role, allowing her to take ownership of her responsibilities and approach her work in a way that best supports the team and residents. She commented, *"I truly enjoy being part of the team and appreciate the collaborative, friendly, and caring atmosphere here. It is inspiring to work alongside people who share the same values and commitment to providing the best care."*

A portrait of Beatriz Granell-Macias, a woman with short blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a white collared shirt and a silver necklace. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage.

"I truly enjoy being part of the team and appreciate the collaborative, friendly, and caring atmosphere here."

Beatriz Granell-Macias

Stacey White

Stacey is a chef at Russell Churcher Court, creating a delicious variety of meals for the care home's residents as well as catering for events across the wider charity, but her career with the organisation started some time ago. In 2017, she joined the care home team as a carer, later moving into the kitchen, training as a kitchen assistant and then achieving promotion to chef.

Stacey said, "I love hearing the residents tell me about what meals they used to have and then I try to recreate that experience for them. I love seeing people enjoy their food and hearing their feedback. I ask residents for their preferences to make their birthday cakes and they always appreciate the effort, it's nice to hear how much they liked them."

Being part of the kitchen team is more than catering for meal times, and Stacey also prepares meals for different dietary needs, such as diabetic foods and catering for those with allergies or difficulty swallowing. Stacey gets involved with resident activities such as decorating cookies with small groups that all staff and residents can then enjoy. She said, *"It's a highlight for me to spend Christmas here with so many lovely people, and I do enjoy the activities - making Easter nests for example, seeing the residents having fun decorating them and then enjoying the products of their work, I love it."*

Pat Musselwhite

Pat is a relative newcomer to Russell Churcher Court, having arrived in March. She lived for 40 years in Hilsea with her late husband Peter. They met when Pat was 17 and were married a year later; he left to do his National Service with the Royal Marines the next day! Pat worked at the Johnson & Johnson baby powder factory, and a components factory, before they started their family. Pat and Peter had two children, and she talks proudly about her three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Pat said, "I was anxious that I might not settle in, but I love it here. I've fitted in really well and get on with everyone, they're all so kind. And the food is lovely too!"



"I've fitted in really well and get on with everyone, they're all so kind. And the food is lovely too!"

Pat Musselwhite

Our activities this year

An important part of the care we provide at Russell Churcher Court is in our schedule of daily activities; a broad range of opportunities for residents to join in and play games, challenge themselves physically or mentally, or simply enjoy some time as part of our community.

We have regular favourites such as quizzes, bingo and the Daily Sparkle, where we talk about why a particular date is of note in history and residents share their memories with us. This is a brilliant way to engage people in conversation, particularly those with dementia who often have excellent recall of particular past moments in their lives.

We like to encourage regular exercise and by working with Visosport, a company that specialises in inclusive and accessible sport, we've been able to create different activities that get residents moving. Table top games like bean bag throwing and

bubble tennis have been a great success and got us all in the spirit of having fun.

Visitors to the home are always popular and we are lucky to have returning local favourites like Freddy Sax, Maya Dodkins and Bradley Page, performing as From Sinatra to Bublé. Many of our residents are quick to get up and dance during their favourite songs, and we even have a few who volunteer to duet with the performers!

Jiggy Wrigglers is a local toddler group that comes along to host sessions in our lounge, with small children singing songs and playing games with our residents, plus we have regular visits from local school children who like to bring us artwork for our gallery or share their stories, such as on World Book Day this year. Whenever children visit us there's a real sense of joy among the residents and we love hearing the children's chatter!



Another firm favourite is when we are visited by animals, and this year we've had a few special events that we've all enjoyed. Kevin the kestrel came along as part of a talk on birds of prey and many of our residents were brave enough to provide a perch for Kevin. We also had a visit from Noel the donkey in December as part of our festive activities – he had his own pen in a corner of the lounge and loved all the attention!

We also took part in rearing ducklings again this year after it was so successful the first time around, welcoming Incredible Eggs, an ethical provider of high-welfare hatching kits, back with four eggs. Once again, resident Ron took the lead as we watched the ducklings hatch and we took care of them for the first week or so of their lives, quickly

progressing from their eggs to practice swims in a paddling pool in our lounge! The ducklings were all rehomed to staff or family of residents. A wonderful experience that our staff and residents all enjoy being a part of.

As well as overseeing activities for residents in Russell Churcher Court, Activity Team Leader JoJo Green is also busy connecting with community groups and this year she was recognised for her efforts by the Community Champions at Asda Gosport as part of the company's 60th birthday celebrations. In an event that brought together people from around the local area for awards, JoJo was celebrated for her dedication to making Gosport a better place to live for her local community. Well deserved, we say!



Value for money financial report



Our social housing financial performance

The Regulator of Social Housing requires us to report to them how we are performing financially overall on social housing (i.e. excluding our care home operations). This metric indicates our financial stability – it shows the margin we make operating the organisation on a day-to-day basis.

We compare this to a peer group of similar organisations. The metrics we have chosen and have consistently reported on for the last few years are a mixture of both hard financial data and targets related to social impact and based on our charitable objects.

This translates into a number of monthly key performance indicators that the executive reports on monthly, procurement measures that we review periodically, and forward-looking targets which reflect our forward focused business plan, as well as systematically examining our governance.

Void reporting

Both housing and care home voids are reported monthly to the board and Thorngate sets its own targets on voids. Thorngate also benchmarks itself against the Smaller Providers Benchmarking Group, and this figure has been reported on where relevant below.

We report voids on a percentage basis monthly and on a lost revenue basis annually. Our housing voids target is 2.5% or less voids. This can be affected by, for example, increased development or major repairs, if this means more transfers of residents or decanting.

Void pro-rata 12m	Thorngate 2024-25	Thorngate 2023-24	Thorngate 2022-23	Thorngate 2021-22	Peer Group 2024-25
Housing %	0.09%	0.14%	0.23%	0.22%	1.7%
Care %	6.82%	4.08%	4.67%	1.70%	N/A

We have once again turned in an excellent performance on housing voids and are ranked first overall and in the first quartile yet again in the peer group of smaller similar housing associations. This reflects just how desirable our combined package of high-quality housing and support delivered by on-site staff is to residents. This is also reflected in our very long waiting list for units (currently around 140 applications for 124 flats) with a wait time of around 20 months.

Despite our care voids for 2024-2025 increasing slightly, the income from our care service has increased substantially due to the average rate per day increasing.

Procurement

Since the VFM standard was first introduced, Thorngate has reported its performance against prior years in a number of areas. This has shown useful trends and has continued this year. The focus areas continue to be gas and electricity purchases, and care home food costs. These have been chosen because almost all our properties have gas included in the weekly maintenance charges, communal electricity is a large cost and for our care home, food is one of the largest costs. These figures can only be considered year on year within the same organisation because of different characteristics between different providers.

Gas		2022-23 £43,739 -5.54%	2023-24 £71,019 +62.4%	2024-25 £125,484 +76.7%
Electricity		2022-23 £48,418 -4.15%	2023-24 £45,425 -6.2%	2024-25 £66,617 +46.65%
Food (care home per resident)		2022-23 £2,040 -5.73%	2023-24 £2,287 +12%	2024-25 £2,186 -4.4%

While we will always seek to reduce our utility costs, we look to at least maintain our food cost budget per person level, as there is a correlation between quality and cost and the case of food for care home residents, and nutrition is a key part of caring for frail residents.

On gas and electricity procurement, we go to the market and our three-year deal on gas ended in December 2023, with electricity ending in June 2024. We were extremely lucky to get a good deal in Spring/Summer 2020. A new contract was negotiated last year, and while competitive it is nevertheless higher than the very low-priced deal we came out of. Gas is used for heating and hot water in both housing and care homes and only the new developments of Lucas Court, Garden View and Station Road buy their own gas. It should be noted that if housing residents had to buy their own gas or electricity they would not be able to buy this as competitively as we do, however of course they would have more control over usage.

Gas: Our spend on gas has increased dramatically this year. This is due to the ending of our advantageous gas contracts in December 2023, and the start of a good but nonetheless more expensive (270% increase) contract in January 2024. Further, our actual unit usage increased by 4.55%. Gas usage, as well as price, continues to be a key focus for us going forward especially while we work on our carbon reduction plan.

Electricity: Spend on electricity has increased due to the new contract this year. This financial year reflects nine months of the new contract price. Overall unit usage dropped again this year by 8.15%.

Food: Despite a challenging environment around food costs, our catering manager brought the food costs in under budget and at a broadly similar level to last year, while still delivering excellent food, and catering for special events.



Complaints Policy



We take any form of complaint very seriously and we have procedures in place to ensure we respond quickly, fairly and consistently, as well as identifying any areas for improvement as part of the process. The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code was updated this year and we have reviewed our policies in line with the new document.

Complaints performance and service improvement report 2024/2025

As part of Thorngate Churcher Trust's (TCT) commitment to meeting the requirements outlined in the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, we conducted an annual self-assessment to ensure our complaint handling policy aligns with the code's requirements.

When handling complaints, TCT strives to interact with residents in a professional, empathetic, and solution-oriented manner. There were three formal complaints made in the year, all resolved at the first stage of the handling process and within the set timescales.

TCT has examined records of past complaints and resolutions for the last 12 months, April 2024 - March 2025. This review report refers to the handling of these complaints.

Complaint 1

A resident raised concerns regarding the standard procedure of wardens checking all rooms during maintenance visits, despite prior notification that the property would be unoccupied. The resident expressed that this practice felt intrusive, though it was acknowledged as part of the organisation's safety protocol. After investigating the complaint, TCT provided the resident with three alternative options for maintenance visits, allowing them to tailor the service to their privacy preferences, the resident chose an option and expressed satisfaction with the resolution, appreciating the flexibility provided.

This complaint prompted a review of privacy-related procedures for maintenance visits. The new option-based approach will now be communicated to all residents during maintenance scheduling to better respect their preferences while upholding safety standards.

Complaint 2

A resident's family raised concerns regarding the mismanagement of a privately-owned wheelchair, purchased for the late father of the resident, which had been mistakenly moved from a locked storage room and lent out without permission. This caused significant distress to the resident and her family.

Following an investigation, we issued a formal apology to the resident and her family for the misunderstanding and emotional impact, ensuring the return of a misplaced cushion and clarifying the circumstances behind the error. The family acknowledged the return of the cushion and appreciated the apology but emphasised the need for better property management to prevent such issues.

To prevent recurrence, all personal items stored in shared spaces are now required to be clearly labelled with the owner's name, a detailed inventory will be maintained for items stored in shared or locked storage areas, and staff training has been updated to reinforce the importance of distinguishing personal property from communal resources.

Complaint 3

A resident reported a severe mice infestation in their flat, which persisted despite ongoing pest control and maintenance efforts. The issue caused significant distress and contributed to the resident's decision to vacate the property.

Upon receiving the complaint, the following steps were taken:

- Pest control measures: Weekly pest control visits were implemented, and stronger bait was placed in key areas to increase effectiveness.
- Maintenance efforts: The maintenance team conducted thorough inspections to identify and seal entry points, dedicating significant time to addressing the issue.
- Resident support: The resident was offered alternative accommodations, including a guest room and options at other sites.

Despite the steps taken, the resident decided to move sooner than planned due to the prolonged nature of the issue and its impact on their living conditions. The complaint was officially closed upon their departure. This case highlighted the need for enhanced preventative measures and faster escalation protocols for pest-related issues. As a result:

- A Pest management review has been initiated to assess and improve the effectiveness of pest control contractors.
- Proactive inspections are now conducted in high-risk areas to address potential issues before they escalate.
- Wardens now have direct contact with pest control services, ensuring immediate action when an issue is reported.
- A local pest control contractor has been contracted to ensure quicker attendance and resolution of infestations.
- Maintaining open lines of communication with residents during infestations allows for swift identification and resolution of underlying causes.



TCT has considered ways to collate resident feedback on complaint handling, formal or informal feedback mechanisms and has added complaints to the agenda of TCT's quarterly resident consultative meeting. TCT already supplies suggestion boxes at all sites, feedback surveys after a repair has been carried out and the complaint process is in fortnightly resident newsletters as well as on the TCT's website with an online form.



TCT priorities for the coming year include enhancing tools for complaint tracking and reporting, by implementing a log to record service requests, enquiries and comment/suggestions to ensure that TCT acknowledge or respond. TCT will also expand resident engagement opportunities to gather feedback on TCT performance, through the resident survey planned for the end of 2025.



TCT has not refused to accept any complaints during the last year. There are no findings of non-compliance with this code by the Ombudsman, or any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of TCT.



TCT has a section in the annual report detailing the complaints policy and copy of 2024 self-assessment, a copy is also given to all residents and published on TCT website.

Thorngate Trustees



Our Trustees



Mark Hook

In his role as Chair Mark is committed to both the wellbeing of residents and the long-term future of the trust.



Jim Gilhooley

As a former Chair of Trustees, Jim's expertise as an HR professional continues to be an important element of our board.



Christopher Matthews

Chris is a partner in law firm Churchers. There has always been a partner from Churchers on the board of trustees and Chris is mainly involved in strategic decisions and adding value to legal and business decisions.



Julie Palmer

Julie's background in social services is a key area of expertise on the board of trustees.



John Clark

John is a housing professional who has worked for various large housing associations in roles ranging from repairs and complaints management to housing manager before becoming executive director at Orione Care.



Ollie Zaki

Ollie is a partner at local law firm Glanvilles and says he is pleased to be involved as a trustee using his professional expertise and the opportunity to give something back to the community.



David Popoola-Smith

David joined the board of trustees in 2022 and as a social worker is highly experienced in adult social care.



Thorngate Churcher Trust

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