


Thorngate Churcher Trust
HOUSING AND CARE SINCE 1868

ThorngateLiving

Annual Report 2021



Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
Our mission and our values	4
Background.....	5
Chairman’s view.....	6
Chief Executive’s view	7-8
ABOUT THORNGATE CHURCHER TRUST	9
Our focus going forward.....	10
Thorngate in the community.....	11-12
Our latest development plans.....	13
LIFE AT THORNGATE	14
Our team - Profile Ken Lyon	15-16
Our team – Profile Lukasz Irzabek	17-18
Our resident representatives	19
Our residents	20
Resident case studies	21-23
Housing and social care.....	24
VALUE FOR MONEY REPORT	25
Our performance and demonstrating Value for Money	26
Our social housing financial performance.....	26
How well we fill our properties called “Void Reporting”	27
How well we purchase Procurement.....	28-29
THORNGATE TRUSTEES	30
Our Trustees	31
Chair of the Board - Jim Gilhooley	32
Our invaluable team	33

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

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

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



Background

It will be no surprise that the last year for residents, family members and our colleagues has been dominated by Covid-19. Despite this our strong sense of our mission as well as living our values has meant we have all come together to deliver the safest and best experience that we can for everyone.

Despite Covid-19, we still focussed on delivering the best possible housing and care we could. In reality, this meant delivering a strong programme of internal activities in Russell Churcher Court as well as continuing to maintain levels of staffing so that care standards did not fall. Mini-audits in infection control carried out by the Care Quality Commission vindicated this approach and enabled us to maintain our “Good” rating from CQC.

Once the first lockdown eased we were able to admit new residents in need of housing into our sheltered schemes. Given the very large waiting list we have for housing this felt like an essential piece of normality returning. In addition, we furthered our development ambitions as part of our corporate strategy with our search and ongoing discussions for a new site for our specialist housing.

Key to the future of our organisation in the next decade is our digital transformation work. We accomplished a number of innovative projects in 2020-21 utilising care and housing data as well as data from feedback systems and surveys to continue our journey of continuous improvement throughout the organisation.

Above everything else the past year has shown the commitment of everyone to delivering our best support and care through teamwork. From every single member of our board through all our housing and care colleagues, our residents and their family members and friends we have all come together to maintain our strong community and help each other through these difficult times.

Chairman's view

Jim Gilhooley



Welcome to our 2021 annual report. It is always a pleasure to report to you on the achievements the organisation has delivered in the year.

This year I think it is particularly important to highlight what we have achieved as one team to continue to deliver our mission. We have all worked hard in our different roles to deliver another strong performance, operationally and financially and I am grateful to our staff teams and all our residents for their contributions.

An organisation that is continuing to grow and change like Thorngate Churcher Trust needs a strong board with a range of diverse skills. We are very lucky at Thorngate to have a dedicated board filled with people committed to making a genuine difference to residents' and employees' lives.

Firstly, we welcomed three new board members in the summer of 2020; Reeta Ram is a non-practising lawyer and housing support specialist, John Clark is a regional housing manager for large provider Abri Group, and Oliver Zaki is a senior property lawyer at a local firm.

These further strengthened our board in addition to our existing diverse board of Chris Matthews (partner at Churchers solicitors), Diane Searle (ex-mayor of Gosport), Mark Hook (leader of Gosport Borough Council until May 2020) Julie Palmer (retired businesswoman), and Andrew Gordon (digital, strategy and employee engagement specialist).

This commitment from the board members has been especially important this year when we have faced a number of challenges. To deal with Covid-19 the board successfully transitioned to virtual meetings and, between lockdowns, continued to hold our strategy days, where a number of key topics are discussed in greater depth than at board meetings. In addition, the board has been working with the senior leadership team to look at new sites for extending our social housing offer.

I want to thank all my fellow board members on behalf of the organisation for their commitment and focus in helping the team face the year's challenges.

Finally, I wish everyone a successful forthcoming year as we seek to deliver on our mission despite the challenges, Covid-19 or otherwise that we may face in 2021-22.

Chief Executive's view

Anne Taylor



It will be no surprise to you to learn that the ongoing pandemic, which affected every area of the organisation's operations, was

a key challenge for 2020-21 and continued to be so after the year end.

The leadership team brought our contingency plan into place early in 2020 to increase our staffing levels to enable us to continue to deliver our services to residents despite shielding of some vulnerable staff members, and an outbreak in our care home in December 2020. The dedication of colleagues on site throughout the pandemic has left me speechless with admiration for their incredible hard work despite fears for themselves and their families. I want to thank all our colleagues whatever their role for their help in dealing with the pandemic.

I also want to thank each and every resident. Lockdown was so very difficult with the closure of our communal lounges and the restrictions on contact with wardens. Social interaction is a huge part of community living and everyone has played their part in getting through these tough times.

Maintaining our investment in our housing and care schemes in spite of the pandemic remains as important as ever to us and we did manage to complete some important capital projects in 2020-2021. At our Elizabeth Court scheme we installed a new hot water and heating system with two new efficient communal

boilers and associated pipework. This should produce both a more consistent heating experience and a reduction in the cost of energy. At both Elizabeth Court and Thorngate Court we upgraded the external CCTV systems to improve security. We carried out a number of other projects at Thorngate Court; we renewed the main block entrance fitting a new door with an electronic system to make access easier, installed a new large cycle and motorbike store, and upgraded the TV aerial system. In Melrose Gardens we carried out a number of estate related improvements to boundaries and the car parks.

Despite Covid-19, we have remained clear on the primary aims of delivering enhanced housing and support to enable older people to live independently and the provision of residential care.

Unfortunately, we just have not been able to deliver the usual levels of social activities that make living in our schemes such a pleasure but we hope as the restrictions ease in 2021 we will get back to lunch clubs, yoga, and all the social events residents enjoy, many of which are organised by residents themselves.

Understanding what our residents value and what concerns them has always been a priority of ours, and we have a number of mechanisms to hear our resident voice. Although the residents' forum met only when lockdown was eased, our wardens have continued to be available to hear residents' concerns and to act upon them. Further we have enhanced our repairs reporting with

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the introduction of a new feedback system both electronic and on paper. Our feedback systems introduced at the Russell Churcher Court and Lucas Court as part of our visitors reception software have enabled us to gain visitor feedback too.

I mentioned our staff teams above. We can't deliver any of our services without them. We continue to believe training and development are crucial. All our care teams must complete the care certificate and most go on to do NVQs at various levels from 2 to 5. Other examples of the training we provide includes Chartered Institute of Housing – Housing Practice for our housing teams, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development courses.

In a tight recruitment market it remains a point of difference between us and some of our local competitors for staff that we spend so much time training our people. Several of our staff members have also been provided with professional mentors during the year where this will help them

enhance their performance to ensure we continue to deliver in excess of expectations.

A focus has also been pushing forward on our development plans. In 2019-20 we developed a strategy for finding new sites and we have continued moving that forward and negotiating strongly on one of these. We hope to see some fruit from this work in 2021-22.

The executive could not deliver any part of this without a supportive board. We are very fortunate to have an engaged group of trustees who make a consistently high contribution to our strategy and respond quickly to the need to make board level decisions, meeting virtually as necessary through this last year. On a personal level I feel lucky to work with such a great team.

It genuinely is a joy to come to work at Thorngate, and that is because of all the people who live and work here. I send my heartfelt thanks to every one of you; and I look forward to delivering our mission with you all in the forthcoming year.



About Thorngate Churcher Trust



Our focus going forward

To continue to be a destination of choice for housing residents, care residents and employees

To develop new supported housing schemes for our existing resident profile group



Founded in
1868



In excess of
£2.5m
annual turnover



124
sheltered flats
for assisted living



Care home
rated **GOOD**
by Care Quality
Commission



44
bed care home
for the elderly



Available to
**singles &
couples**
of limited means

We are members of



Thorngate in the community

Thorngate has been part of the community in Gosport since it was founded back in 1868. The portfolio of properties has grown and evolved over the years and being part of the community continues to be at the heart of Thorngate.

While the last year has been challenging for everyone the community spirit has continued and our residents have joined forces to support the local community and we have been delighted to have been included in a range of initiatives created by people in the local area.

- Staff at Russell Churcher Court were overwhelmed to receive Bags of Love from the Mothers' Union as a thank you for all the hard work they have been doing. We also thank Asda in Gosport which donated bags of goodies for residents in the care home and supplies for our staff. Thanks also go to those who baked cakes, knitted amazing teddies and wrote to our residents – everything is appreciated.
- At Easter we also welcomed some very special guests with Evie and Ava paying us a visit to deliver Easter Eggs for everyone. Evie and Ava are young ambassadors at Acts of Kindness and were involved in the charity's Easter campaign which collected almost 4,000 eggs for the local community. The eggs were distributed to schools, care homes and families in the Gosport and Fareham areas and it was lovely to meet them and find out about how they had collected eggs.



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- Our residents have also been busy helping the local community in a variety of different ways. Some helped the **Office for National Statistics** which contacted us to see if we would help out with its COVID-19 survey. This involved regular tests for the volunteers in a study to monitor how Covid-19 was spreading in the community.
- We also had residents putting their time and crafting skills to very good use. Thorngate residents have been making hats, gloves and scarves for the **homeless who were at Walpole Park** in Gosport and also creating little bonnets and clothing for premature babies which have been donated to **Baby Basics**.
- A number of residents have been donating food to the **Family Church** in Gosport and Bridgemary to help those in need.
- As a community we are also involved in a new initiative in the area to help tackle climate change. We are part of the **Greening Gosport Campaign** which brings communities together to make small, simple changes that help cut CO2 emissions, save money and make Gosport a greener place to live. Residents in Leesland, Elson and Hardway, Town, and Lee-on-the-Solent have all taken up the challenge, supported by Gosport Borough Council with this project following in the footsteps of 100 other communities!

Thorngate Churcher Trust has joined our local Greening group – Greening Leesland.



Our latest development plans

At Thorngate we maintain our commitment to provide more housing for local people and have been working hard on plans for a new development in the town.

We are looking to create about 30 new homes for those who are over 50 and of limited means with our planning application currently going through the planning process.

The development includes one bedroom apartments together with communal areas and landscaped grounds which are so popular with residents.

We know there is tremendous demand from those in this sector who are looking for a social landlord who can help them live independently but with the benefit of warden support. We are looking to help as many of these as possible as part of our long-term plans and commitment to Gosport.

These plans coincide with a report from the Research Trust of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors which highlighted the success of our sheltered accommodation as part of the comprehensive study.

The report looked at almshouses as a solution for housing an ageing population in the future.

Almshouses such as Thorngate are a charitable form of self-sufficient, low-cost community housing for local people in housing need. Thorngate provided its first almshouses in 1865 and continues to offer the highest standards of housing to those in need.

The report is one of the most comprehensive ever undertaken into almshouses and looks at the vital role they can play in being part of a community and providing homes for older people both now and in the future.

RICS Research Trust used our most recent developments in Gosport to highlight the importance of almshouses, like Thorngate, play in the community and how, by working with a number of partners, we can secure the funding needed and the experts required to produce attractive, practical and aspirational homes for people.

The report highlights the distinct and valuable contribution almshouses make to housing older people and the fact that the almshouse movement is committed to adapting for the future.



Life at Thorngate



Our team

Ken Lyon, Property Services Manager

One of the priorities within Thorngate is to ensure all of the properties are well maintained for the residents, a role which comes under the remit of Ken Lyon, the property services manager.

Ken joined Thorngate in 2019 and has since become an important member of the management team.

Before joining Thorngate Ken worked in the building trade for more than 30 years starting as a carpenter for property developers before working for a housing association as a surveyor and then moving into housing maintenance.

Since joining Thorngate Ken has continued to build on his experience and qualified at the end of 2019 to take over the health and safety management of Thorngate.

Ken is a technical member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health and an associate member of the International Institute for Risk and Safety Management.

All of his recent training was quickly put into action last year as the pandemic hit and the health and safety of the whole of Thorngate took on a new level of importance.

"It was a baptism of fire so to speak putting all of my training into practice," said Ken whose work began with a new level of risk assessments.

"One of the first tasks was risk assessment for the care home, its residents and staff and also those in the sheltered housing," said Ken.

"There are no patterns for a pandemic so it was essential to work with all the department managers to understand their roles and challenges to introduce measures for them to be able to continue their work as safely as possible."

It was not just the staff working on site that Ken had to risk assess as a number were working from home following government guidance at the time.



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"There was also work to rearrange the office to enable staff to come back to work and ensure they could safely maintain social distancing."

Staff training was another key area for Ken to oversee and started with instructing everyone in the use of fogging machines to effectively disinfect communal areas and residents' rooms and also training in the correct use of PPE.

"During the outbreak I also worked with staff to implement isolation protocols for any residents who contracted Covid-19 and supported staff to ensure strict adherence to Covid-19-control practices."

As lockdown began Ken says that he stopped all non-emergency contractors

from entering any Thorngate property and where possible temporary solutions were used until it was considered safe for other contractors to be in buildings.

"It was crucial for us to ensure we had the very best practices and procedures in place to minimise the risk of Covid-19 and protect our residents and our staff," said Ken.

"If there was an emergency we would respond in full PPE and ensured residents were kept safe in another room while we were in their flat or room," said Ken.

"The last year has been a real challenge for everyone but we have worked together as a team to do everything we could to protect everyone."



Our team

Lukasz Irzabek, Russell Churcher Court Manager

There's no doubt that operations at Russell Churcher Court have been dominated by Covid-19 in the last 18 months with the team focussed on doing everything possible to protect staff and residents.

For registered manager Lukasz Irzabek the day-to-day running of the care home has been supplemented by unprecedented activity in dealing with the virus.

Lukasz joined the Thorngate team two years ago and has been instrumental in helping the care home improve its ratings with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with the home rated Good in its last full inspection.

At Thorngate we took proactive steps before the whole country was placed into lockdown and Russell Churcher Court was one of the first homes in Hampshire to go into lockdown a full three weeks before the country followed suit.

"We acted early in creating a Covid-19 action plan for the home and to support staff here," said Lukasz.

"Our comprehensive plans included looking at infection control, staffing and contingency plans, visiting arrangements and PPE," he said.

The plans here were shared with the local Clinical Commissioning Group and our detailed assessment and planning was implemented by other homes as everyone sought to minimise Covid-19 in their care homes.

The dedication and commitment of the staff and their work to comply with a range of new measures helped the home minimise the impact of Covid-19 as much as possible and Lukasz personally moved into the home to support the team.



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"We have a great team ethic here at Russell Churcher Court and this was reinforced by everyone's dedication during the pandemic where staff were trained to support other departments and regularly changing guidelines were implemented efficiently."

More staff have been recruited in the last 18 months and ensuring all staff are vaccinated is integral to our ongoing virus control plans.

Visitors has been a key area for control, whether that is healthcare professionals or friends and family.

All visitors were provided with PPE packs and guidance on how to ensure correct use. Healthcare professionals and visitors had to go through rigorous procedures with temperature checks, questionnaire and PPE being worn during the visit.

In addition to this a visiting pod was created inside the conservatory to enable visitors to see their loved ones as restrictions were lifted enough to allow visits.

There was also a comprehensive programme to help residents with checks introduced to monitor oxygen saturation, heart rate and blood pressure which identified any changes quickly.

When there were cases of the virus the home was inspected by the CQC, which is the independent regulator for health and social care, and our infection prevention control and safety plan was praised by the inspector.

Despite a massive focus on Covid-19 Lukasz said that the daily work of the staff continued. *"All business critical tasks were completed in a timely manner including audits and quality assurance processes,"* he said.



Our resident representatives

Our resident representatives are an integral part of our sheltered housing operation and are the perfect link between residents on all three of our sites and the team at Thorngate Churcher Trust.

At Thorngate Court we have Sylvia Wrightson who has been a resident for more than 13 years. Also at Thorngate Court is Margaret Jeffery who knows the development well as her mother was also a Thorngate resident.

At Lucas Court we have Linda Bartlett who is a retired nurse and midwife. Since moving to Lucas Court in 2018 she has been involved in a wide range of social events and represents Melrose Gardens residents.

Also representing those at Melrose Gardens is Sue Desbois who says she really enjoys being involved in things and helping where she can.

At Elizabeth Court, Jan Randall and Andrea Meech are the resident representatives. Jan has been a resident for eight years and says she really enjoys being part of a lovely community and getting involved in fundraising events. Andrea moved to Elizabeth Court six years ago and says she loves helping people when she can.

Pictured clockwise from left:
Margaret Jeffery, Jan Randall,
Linda Bartlett, Sue Desbois,
Andrea Meech, Sylvia Wrightson.



Our residents

Residents are at the heart of Thorngate Churcher Trust and ensuring they live in a safe and secure environment is crucial to the ongoing success of the charity.

People move to one of our sheltered homes for many different reasons but they all have something in common – they love being part of the Thorngate community and feeling safe and secure in the developments we provide.



Elsie

Elsie moved into one of our flats in 2015 after suffering a stroke. A former chef at a hotel on Guernsey she was devastated when she suffered the stroke. Elsie's daughter cared for her mum until she was offered her flat.

"I was fortunate enough to be offered a lovely flat overlooking the beautiful gardens," said Elsie. "I was so apprehensive at first, it was daunting prospect to leave the comfort of my daughter's apartment."

"She and her husband had cared for me for six months after my stroke, but it could never be long term as their home was a two-bed apartment on the top floor of a very nice development and it wasn't ideal for me, or them having me there! However the Elizabeth Court community soon welcomed me in."

Elsie is now a key member of the community, she is on the committee and says she loves life at Thorngate.

"I've made some really good friends here and feel totally at home," she said. "Everyone is so friendly, I love taking part in all the activities and as I still love baking there are plenty of people to bake for."



Alan & Christine

Alan and Christine moved into their Thorngate flat just before lockdown in 2020.

The couple had returned from their previous home in Cyprus because of Alan's ill health and were delighted when some friends recommended Thorngate.

Alan was in hospital at the time the couple moved in and Christine said she was so grateful for the welcome and advice she was given.

The pair have now settled happily into their new home and both say they love to sit in the lovely gardens and Christine particularly enjoys the bingo.



"This really is a great community, everyone is really friendly and we feel so protected and safe here. Thank you Thorngate Trust for giving us a home."

Steve & Karen

One of the newest couples to join the Thorngate community is Steve and Karen who moved from a tower block to the peaceful surroundings of Elizabeth Court earlier this year.

"The main thing for us is that we feel safe and secure here," said Karen. "I just love being able to enjoy a cup of tea in the gardens, watch all the wildlife here and be part of a friendly community."

Steve, who is a caretaker at a local school, and Karen, a retail assistant, say they have quickly settled into the community and praised the peace and quiet. They said they loved the fact that there are so many opportunities to mix with the other residents, lots of events but also the benefit of their own flat.



"We feel we have been given a great opportunity to live here and we are really enjoying life here."

Housing & social care

Thorngate prides itself on offering all residents a high quality service in all of their dealings with the trust, and the staff here at Thorngate are key to ensuring that everyone feels safe, secure and happy in their lives.

But behind the vital human interaction from our wonderful staff is the increasing use of data to ensure that we continue to offer these high levels of service and data even helps us forecast demand in the future.

At Thorngate this data is a tool the management team can use from which to build intelligence about all areas of the organisation and from this information we can gain knowledge which informs all areas of the business.

Chief executive Anne Taylor says that by using a combination of data and good human input Thorngate can effectively plan for the future.

“We can make better decisions if we are informed by strong data and we have worked extremely hard to create systems which provide us with really valuable data so we can see what is going on in the business quickly and easily. We can then identify trends and any areas of concern so these can be addressed quickly and efficiently,” said Anne.

Thorngate has been at the leading edge of digital transformation across a wide range of areas. In our care home, our care, medicines and call bell data have all been utilised to ensure that we understand trends in, for example nutrition and hydration, and can respond to alerts as soon as possible. Our support data shows us areas where housing management need to focus warden attention. Visitor feedback helps us respond quickly to any incidence of a less than perfect visitor experience. Repairs response times and feedback from residents helps us understand where either the service or the approach of contractors can be improved.

While collection of useful data is the first step digital transformation is about converting that data to information and our intelligent interpretation of that information. Further work on our digital future continues in the forthcoming year with new work around fire safety, and a pilot scheme around energy monitoring to both cut our bills and look at how we reduce our carbon footprint, which of course is going to be increasingly important as we move towards a net zero carbon future.

Value for money financial report



Our performance & demonstrating “Value for Money” (VFM)

As a Registered Provider of Social Housing, we have to report to our residents, and the Regulator of Social Housing how we have performed over the year to demonstrate that we offer value for money to our residents and communities. We are required to let you know how we have fared using this report and via our Annual Report and Accounts which is published on our website or is available to anyone who asks for a copy.

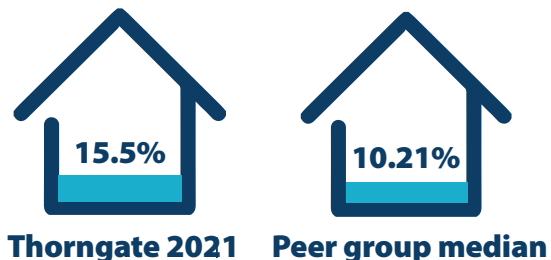
Some of the metrics are technical so what we do in this report is consistently highlight some of the most straightforward and repeatable metrics so you can compare our performance with other similar organisations and with our past performance. In addition the leadership team at Thorngate report monthly and quarterly to our board on a range of financial and operational performance measures ensuring that we continue to deliver on our mission effectively and efficiently.

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.

Our results show that we compare favourably with similar organisations.



Operating Margin Social Housing Lettings

How well we fill our properties called “Void Reporting”

Both housing and care home voids (empty periods) are reported monthly to the board and Thorngate sets its own targets on voids. Thorngate also benchmarks itself against the Smaller Providers Benchmarking Group.

Voids are affected by how quickly we can turn around a vacant flat (or room in the care home) once a resident leaves us. This can be affected by for example, major repairs or current residents transferring between flats.




Void pro-rata 12m	Thorngate 2020-21	Thorngate 2019-20	Thorngate 2018-19	Thorngate 2017-18	Thorngate 2016-17	SPBM 2020-21
Housing %	0.27%	0.25%	0.51%	1.04%	0.31%	2.15%
Care %	3.9%	1.17%	1.98%	1.79%	1.53%	15%

We have once again turned in an excellent performance on voids and are ranked first in the peer group of smaller similar housing associations for housing void control and second in the peer group for care home void control. This reflects just how desirable our combined package of high-quality housing and high quality housing support delivered by on-site staff are to residents. This is also reflected in our very long waiting list for units (currently around 70

applications for 124 flats). The higher housing voids experienced in 2017-18 are entirely due to the completion of the new build flats and short delays to residents moving in according to personal circumstances.

The increased figures for care reflect the Covid-19 pandemic, both for us and for the peer group and we have done significantly better than the peer group median.

How well we purchase - “Procurement”

Gas		2018-19 £51,551	2019-20 £63,471 +23%	2020-21 £61,045 -3.8%
Electric		2018-19 £42,669	2019-20 £46,916 +10%	2020-21 £49,983 +6.5%
Food (care home per resident)		2018-19 £1,687	2019-20 £1,516 -10%	2020-21 £1,404 -7.4%

Thorngate differs from most small housing providers because of the proportion of care it provides through its care home Russell Churcher Court. This means that some of our highest value purchases include items related to care such as food. It also means we have high gas and electric purchases due to the need to maintain high levels of warmth and services within the care home and in our housing communal areas. Accordingly, we direct effort towards procuring these “big ticket” items as cost effectively as we can.

Accordingly, as in past years we are reporting on the focus areas of utilities and food for care home residents. 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.

While we seek to reduce our utility costs, we seek to maintain our food costs around the £1,591 (3% increase on last year) 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 electric procurement we go to the market and we were in two year deals on both gas and electric, gas concluding in February 2021 and electric in June 2021. We typically tender a host of suppliers, both brokers and direct and usually are looking at around 15 projections. 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 electric they would not be able to buy this as competitively as we do, however of course they would have more individual control.

Gas: Our spend on gas has fallen a little this year, which is of course good news. Last summer we fitted a major new boiler system at Elizabeth Court, this has already resulted in a 13% decrease in consumption on that site through more efficient operating. From June 2021 we have fitted boiler optimisers with digital data feeds again as part of our digital transformation programme, to enhance the performance of our large communal boilers. The good news is that in Russell Churcher Court early indications are

that the gas boilers are operating more efficiently. We intend to roll this out into Elizabeth Court later in 2021. In addition, the deal we have agreed for the forthcoming three years on gas purchasing will result in a reduction in expense.

Electric: Spend on electricity has once again increased year on year. This has become an area of greater focus for us and we are using our digital transformation project to push forward on sensors to help us to understand why some areas are using larger amounts of electricity than we might have expected. Unfortunately, the new contract we have negotiated which was the best on offer for July 2021 is at an increased rate per unit and reflects the current market in electricity.

Food: Our care home food costs have fallen during the year. This reflects a big push to utilise fresh food. However, it also reflects that we just have not held the events in the care home we would normally expect to hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This spend has already moved back to levels seen pre-pandemic as restrictions eased in later 2021.

Thorngate Trustees



Our Trustees

Trustees play an important role in the running of Thorngate. They set and confirm the future strategic direction of the trust and ensure that we continue to move forward in a vibrant way in keeping both with our charitable mission and the ever-changing regulatory regime.

We have a wide range of specialists on the board who each bring their own area of expertise to the running and the future of the trust.



Chair of the Board

Jim Gilhooley



Chair of the board is Jim Gilhooley who became a trustee in 2016 and works closely with all the trustees and the management team.

Jim lives locally in Fareham and his long and successful career in HR, training and business consultancy makes him an ideal person to chair the board.

His experience includes working with multinational companies in the UK and overseas before setting up his own consultancy which he sold last year.

Married with three grown-up children, Jim is also a trustee of the Solent Diabetes Association which supports local projects and research into reducing the effects of diabetes.

He is also a published writer of a book for children, he is interested in all aspects of the American Civil War and has travelled to many of the key sites in the USA, an active member of his local church and plays ukulele in a local band.

Jim is an enthusiastic supporter of the mission and values at Thorngate and says he enjoys being able to spend time working with the management team and trustees.

Originally from Scotland, Jim first became involved with Thorngate in 2010 as an HR consultant working with the management team.

He was then invited to become a trustee before taking over as chair.

"I really believe in what we are doing," said Jim. "We are very fortunate in having someone of Anne Taylor's calibre and drive as chief executive officer and having a board of trustees who all have their individual areas of expertise."

Jim said the trustees were totally committed to the mission of Thorngate and this strong vision ensures a clear strategy for the future of the trust.

Jim says he sees himself as a facilitator in the running of the trust working with the trustees and management team to ensure that decisions are made calmly and after weighing up all the options.

"My business experience working with people throughout the world and in a number of different industries has taught me to really think things through before making decisions," said Jim. "I thoroughly enjoy what I do with Thorngate and look forward to the future success of the trust."

Our invaluable team



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.



Mark Hook

In his role as trustee Mark is committed to both the wellbeing of residents and the long term future of the Trust. Mark is also

the current Mayor of Gosport.



Diane Searle

Diane was a Gosport Borough Council councillor for 14 years in the Forton and

Gosport Town Wards and has been a Thorngate trustee for the last 10 years.



Andrew Gordon

Andrew has experience across private, public sector and not-for-profit organisations and

with expertise in business development, people development and employee engagement he brings wide expertise to the role of trustee.



Julie Palmer

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



Reeta Ram

Reeta is founder of DPR Housing Limited and Dementia Partners Limited, offering

24 hour staffing for high level support.



John Clark

John is an experienced housing professional who has worked across England for various

large housing associations in roles ranging from repairs and complaints management to housing manager with Abri.



Ollie Zaki

Ollie is a commercial property lawyer 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.



Thorngate Churcher Trust
HOUSING AND CARE SINCE 1868

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Registered non-profit private provider of social housing number 4839.

