



NEWSLETTER

December 2025

Deal sealed for five more years

A robust procurement process has resulted in Shepton Mallet firm 3 Solutions being awarded our repairs and maintenance contract for the next five years.

Full story: page six.

Merry Christmas

&
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

REMEMBER: our office will be closing at 12pm, 24th December 2025 and re-opening at 9am, 2nd January 2026.

Our contractors, 3 Solutions will close their office at 5pm, 23rd December 2025 and will re-open it at 9am on 5th January 2026.

For emergencies call: 07964 034354

Inside this issue
P2 - Residents at Whitehaven P3 - Home improvement rent increase
P4 & P5 - Steve Warran's column & Tenant Survey P6 - 3 Solution appointed as new contractor
P7 - Repairs and Maintenance P8 - My Tenancy Portal plus QR code & New Year smoke free



RESIDENTS at the Whitehaven Care Home always know when Christmas is coming because Santa makes an early appearance, thanks to White Horse tenant, Lyn Nash.



Pictured: Lyn's Santa sitting alongside his home-made fireplace at Whitehaven Care Home

Her home-made Santa adds a touch of cheer as he sits by a fireplace, signalling the start of the festive season. Lyn, who was a carer at the home in Midsomer Norton but is now a general assistant and housekeeper, originally made him for another care home she worked at eight years ago.

"I thought it would be a nice feature for all the residents to see so I just got a PVC decorating suit and stuffed it," she says. "I dressed him and put a wig on him, and then went to a charity shop and bought some glasses and wellingtons for him. I wanted to make him as realistic as I could."

When the home closed after being sold Lyn moved to Whitehaven and when it got close to Christmas remembered her Santa. "I got him back and then had to remake him a bit as he was sagging," she says.

"My husband Nigel got some boxes from the supermarket and we made a fireplace for him to sit by and then we took him to Whitehaven." Their efforts to make him look realistic were almost too good. "One or two of the residents got quite a start," says Lyn, who has lived in Kilmersdon for 36 years. "But once they learned that he was stuffed and he wasn't real, they sort of got used to him sitting in the chair by the fireplace."

"They love him now, they say they know when Christmas is coming when he comes out. We even get a couple of them who sit on his knee and squash him."

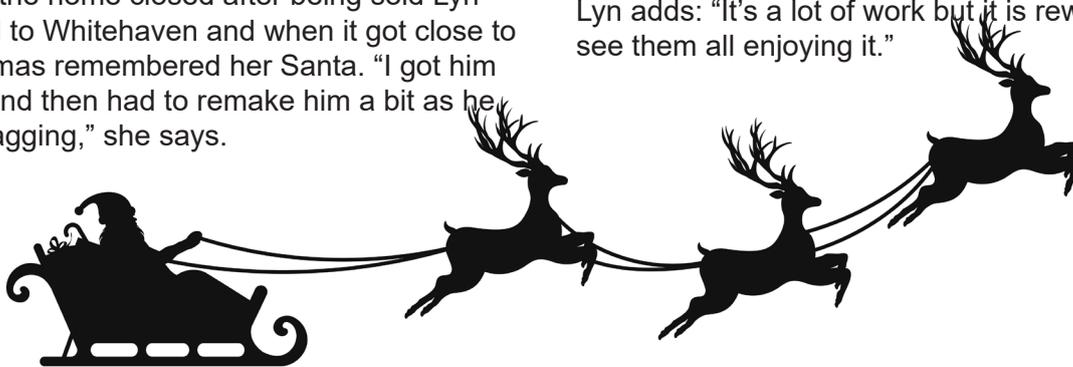
The Santa isn't the only creation they've made for the home. The couple turned a corridor at the home into a 'Memory Lane', with pictures of familiar people, objects and adverts from the 50s to the noughties in different sections.

"We made a whole corridor of pictures of the 1950s and we did another wall 1960s, 1970s, right the way through to 2000," says Lyn. "It took a long time to research but it's lovely because it helps the residents who have dementia."

"They walk down and they've got old adverts for things like Daz and Fairy and Pears Soap and it's surprising how many of them actually remember. Anything to jog a memory is brilliant."

The couple also created one wall of 1950s film and TV stars. Says Nigel: "We had one gentleman who didn't remember his son or daughter but when he walked past the wall he could name everyone on it."

Lyn adds: "It's a lot of work but it is rewarding to see them all enjoying it."



Ho Ho Ho!! Merry Christmas!!

Home improvements will be funded by rent increase

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

It has been a hectic last 12 months or so at White Horse Housing Association. Here's how hard our staff have been working to bring you brilliant value for money.



Our rents are set to rise by 4.8 per cent from April 1 to help us maintain our high standard of service to residents in the face of increasing costs.

The rise is in line with the Government's agreed rent formula for social housing of one per cent above the Consumer Price Index and is still far lower than the rise in average private rent prices - which have gone up by 5.5 per cent in the 12 months to September 2025, according to the Office for National Statistics.

The increase is due to the higher costs we face in maintaining our programme of improvements to our homes, including delivering the decent homes programme, improving the energy efficiency of our homes, tackling damp and mould and continuing to build new homes in the rural locations where they are most needed.

One of the biggest pressures we face is in meeting the need for repairs as quickly as possible because the cost of materials has risen significantly, pushing our expenditure above the rate of inflation.

Chief Executive, Steve Warran says: "We don't want to cut back the range of repairs we offer, or reduce the quality of the fixtures and fittings we install, as some other providers have chosen to do. We remain committed to maintaining high standards in all our homes".

Our Housing Support Fund will again be available to support tenants throughout the coming year. Operations Director Belinda Eastland says: "This fund offers help, advice and financial assistance to anyone struggling with the cost of living".

Our Tenancy Plus service is also available to provide support with benefit claims, budgeting and a wide range of tenancy issues. If anyone is finding it difficult to pay their rent, please contact our Operations Team as soon as possible. We are here to help and will work with you to find the best way forward."

Steve Warran's column



Chief Executive Steve Warran reflects on all 'the latest' at White Horse Housing Association.

As each year draws to a close I like to look back - and forward - to appreciate what progress we've made and focus on what is coming next.

At first glance 2025 has been a funny old year without the show-stopping highlights of 2024 because much of it has been occupied with admin work behind the scenes. To compare it to housebuilding, we've been doing an awful lot of groundwork and foundation laying which will pave the way for real progress in 2026.

Pictured: Steve Warran, Chief Executive

We've spent a lot of time on financial arrangements, and all of the paperwork that goes into satisfying lenders, so that we have the resources to push on with next year's building programme. That has meant a great deal of to-ing and fro-ing between solicitors, council officials and financiers, but the effort will be worth it.

Then there has been the re-procurement process for our repairs and maintenance contract which, as you'll see elsewhere in this newsletter, has resulted in 3 Solutions continuing its partnership with us. It's been an exacting process to make sure the decision is watertight and now we are in discussions with them to deliver an even better service for our tenants from April 1.

We've also been having many conversations with developers, architects and councils, with the result being a busy programme of housebuilding next year.

Our first partnership with Gaiger Brothers will see two rental and two shared ownership homes being built at the Townsend Farm scheme at Poulshot by June. It's Gaiger's first foray into affordable homes and we've been advising them for some time. I'm hoping it's a relationship that will be fruitful in the future.



Pictured: Artist's impression of development at Townsend Farm, Poulshot

We are working again with Hills Homes to deliver five rental homes and three shared ownership homes at Garden Close, Sutton Benger, and also again with Stonewood Group on eight rental and three shared ownership homes at Stoke St Michael in Somerset – both by next summer.



Pictured: Artist's impression of development at Sutton Benger

Fingers crossed, we will also finally see spades in the ground on our project for six homes, four rental and two shared ownership, in Knighton Road, Broad Chalke, near Salisbury (in partnership with the Broad Chalke Community Land Trust).



Pictured: Artist's impression of development at Broad Chalke CLT

It has taken eight years to get off the ground and has been a long and exhausting road to travel, but at last we appear to have brokered an agreement with Wiltshire Council over our contribution towards dealing with any pollution caused by the development, but at the same time making the project affordable.

Our whole reason for being here is to build new homes in rural communities where they are desperately needed and every conversation we have in our meetings is geared towards this, so it will be wonderful to see these homes take shape.

There has been a lot else to celebrate in 2025. I am very proud of the seven new homes we built at Primrose View in Worton and of the way we conducted our move to Box House after we were given notice by Wiltshire Council to leave our home of eight years at Lowbourne in Melksham.

I'm also pleased to see the increasing role our Tenant Scrutiny Panel is playing in our decision making and the turnouts we've had at our tenants' meetings. We want everyone involved at every step of the way and we appreciate their commitment to that.

I'm delighted that our fantastic staff have been there with support for our tenants - financial, practical and even emotional - to help them remain safe and well in their homes. I'm constantly amazed to hear about how they go above and beyond for them and I can't imagine there is another housing association in the country that provides such a thorough service.

Right, that's 2025 dealt with, all that remains is to wish everyone a joyful and peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Tenant survey will help make life better for residents



We have been busy conducting the 2025 White Horse Housing Association Tenant Satisfaction survey, which will help shape the association's priorities and policies for the next few years.

To thank residents for taking part, all respondents are being entered into three separate draws to win £100.

Many tenants have already completed the survey online or by post but we are giving everyone a final chance to take part over the phone. We'll be calling everyone who hasn't yet responded.

Chief Executive Steve Warran says the most important purpose of the survey is to gauge how White Horse is performing against its own high standards of response, performance and satisfaction.

He says: "What our tenants think of us is hugely important to us and by asking all of these questions we can get a good picture of how we are performing and where we need to do better. Our last three surveys have returned very positive results, in 2023 we received an overall satisfaction rate of 96 percent, but that doesn't mean we are complacent. We have looked closely at every comment we received to see where we can make improvements."

Anyone with questions about the survey can contact the White Horse office on 01380 850916 or at info@whitehorsehousing.co.uk.

Tenants play key role in appointing new repairs and maintenance contractor



Pictured: Dani Harris & Jolie Barnes (3 Solutions Customer Services), WHHA Maintenance Manager, Darrel Smith and CEO Steve Warran with 3 Solutions Directors, Rich Watts and Tony Guidi, together with Jack Cliff and Carla Watts.

After a rigorous procurement process 3 Solutions have been reappointed as our repairs and maintenance contractor for the next five years.

The Shepton Mallet-based company had held the previous contract since 2017 but as it came to the end of its term, we had to enter into a tendering process to comply with recent Government legislation.

To help us manage the process correctly, we appointed ARK Consultants to oversee the tender process and guide us through the regulatory requirements. Nine contractors submitted bids to take on the work.

After an initial assessment, we narrowed the field down to three contractors to progress to the final assessment stage.

For this stage, we assembled an evaluation panel made up of three staff members and three members of our Tenant Scrutiny Panel. They reviewed each submission in detail, with every contractor being assessed on the quality of their proposal and their price for delivering the service.

After thorough a evaluation, 3 Solutions emerged as the successful contractor, achieving the highest score in both the quality and price sections of the tender.

The new contract will begin on April 1 and will run for an initial five-year term. If the performance is maintained at a high standard, we have the option to award two further extensions of two years each.

Chief Executive Steve Warran said: "We are delighted to award this new contract to 3 Solutions.

Over the past nine years they have worked tirelessly to provide an excellent repairs and maintenance service to our tenants and their success has helped White Horse Housing to become one of the best performing associations in the country.

"Both the staff team and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel have worked closely with 3 Solutions during that time, agreeing a number of improvements to the service and finding more efficient ways of working.

"We're confident this close partnership will continue over the next five years and the service our tenants receive will continue to meet the very highest standards."

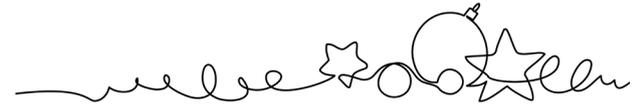
Rich Watts, a 3 Solutions director, said everyone at the company is delighted with the news. "It's great for us because we've been working with White Horse for nine years and the fact that we've been given the opportunity to do it for another five years must mean we are doing something right," he said.

He said the company, which was established in 2011, has many long-serving members among its 34 staff. "We know the properties well and the ladies who do our scheduling and our operatives out in the field know many of tenants, which means we know which time of day they prefer appointments and which ones take a little time to get to the door," he said.

"Many of the tenants know our staff by first name and they trust them, which is important".

"We also have good relationships with local suppliers and we use local contractors like scaffolders so we are making sure the money and the work stays in the local economy. We'll be working with White Horse even more closely to make sure we maintain our high level of service for tenants."

Repairs and maintenance



Pictured: Darrel Smith,
Maintenance Manager

Maintenance Manager, Darrel Smith gives his regular update on what his repairs and maintenance team are up to.

ONE of the most important things we've done this year is ready ourselves for the introduction of Awaab's Law, which came into force in October.

It is named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year boy who died in December 2020 after prolonged exposure to mould in his family's social housing home in Rochdale. His parents had repeatedly raised concerns about damp and mould, but the housing provider failed to take effective action.

The law dictates that landlords like us must act quickly to resolve damp and mould issues – something we have always done but we have updated our procedures to make sure we respond quickly and effectively.

I'm pleased that, with the co-operation of our Housing Officers and frontline staff, we have an excellent procedure for dealing with these issues. At the time of writing we've already had ten calls and all of them have been dealt with speedily. On our website you can find our damp and mould procedure to see how we deal with it.

As part of our armoury to deal with damp and mould we'll also be using remote monitors in homes where we have ongoing issues we can't quite get to the bottom of. The monitors are slightly smaller than a smoke alarm and use sensors to measure temperature and humidity. The data feeds into our Homemaster system so we can analyse it and discover when the problems are occurring.

One thing that helps us help you is for you to keep your home well-ventilated and maintain a constant temperature. As temperatures fall it's tempting to leave your windows closed but when it's warm inside and cold outside that's when condensation can build up, which leads to mould.

The last few weeks have been a busy time, as I've been visiting homes where we've carried out improvements to check that they are to a high standard. I've been looking at an awful lot of new windows, doors, kitchens, bathrooms and boilers as well as external decorations and even the odd porch.

I'm happy to say everything I've seen has been excellent, which allows me to draw a line under 2025's work and focus on the programme for the year ahead.

Just before I finish, there are two things I'd like to pass on. Firstly if you are planning work at home, such as electrical, plumbing, gas or internal or external structural work, make sure you contact us before you start so we are aware of what you are proposing and that it is going to be done correctly and safely.

Finally, it's that time of year when we are indoors with heating and fires on and possibly even a candle lit. Make sure you don't leave any naked flame unattended and check the batteries in your smoke alarms.

We want you all to have a wonderful – and safe – Christmas and New Year. Have a good one.



Tenants are discovering benefits of My Tenancy Portal

More than 75 residents have signed up to the new, improved, My Tenancy portal on our website.

It's an easy way to keep in touch with everything in your tenancy account and it works just as well on a phone as on a laptop or desktop PC.

You can access it from the homepage of our website and if you haven't used it before you can easily register from there. Once you are in you can see a dashboard that has all the up to date information about your recent transactions and account charges. You can print a statement and make a payment through it.

You can also make a new repair request and upload photos, keep track of your repair history and leave feedback, see when your next few inspections are scheduled and see all the documents associated with your account.

It's easy to register, all you need is your tenancy reference number, surname, date of birth, postcode and the email address we have recorded for you. You can see a video showing how it works by scanning the QR code on the right or call us on 01380 850916 for help.

Find the My Tenancy Portal at the top of the homepage at whitehorsehousing.co.uk.

Log In

Your username
This is usually your email address

Your password

Using a private computer or device?
 Stay logged in for 6 months

[Forgotten Password?](#)

Have not registered for an account yet?



Start the New Year smoke free

If you're thinking about giving up smoking as one of your New Year resolutions, we can help. On January 7 we'll be working with Wiltshire Council's Smoke Free Wiltshire experts to run a one-hour online stop smoking workshop.

In the session, which we'll be running at 11.30am and 7pm, there'll be free, friendly support to help you go smoke free - in a way that works for you. Join us for a relaxed online session via Microsoft Teams to find out how we can support you and others in your community.

Email@ info@whitehorsehousing.co.uk for more info and to book a place.

White Horse Housing Association Ltd
Offices 6-9, Box House, Box, Wiltshire, SN13 8AA

T: 01380 850916 E: info@whitehorsehousing.co.uk
www.whitehorsehousing.co.uk



Follow us on Facebook to see latest news, useful advice and much more



facebook.com/WhiteHorseHousing/

