



Doing your own thing



Tenant Shirley Ryder says the best thing about having your own place is being able to 'do your own thing'.

Shirley moved into her Progress Care HA self-contained flat in Salford two years ago and is certainly making the most of her independence. She works Monday to Friday in the WRVS café shop in North Manchester General Hospital, and spends her spare time doing all sorts of activities including embroidery, swimming, bingo, cooking and listening to music.

Shirley's long term aim is to get a paid job. In the meantime she is concentrating on her voluntary work with the WRVS gaining experience that she hopes will help her get into employment.

Shirley describes a typical day: "I get to the hospital for 8am, sign in and open up the shop. The first thing I do is get the shop stocked up with crisps, sweets, tea and coffee. I have to go down to the store room to get the stock. I get the coffee machine filled up, ready for 9am when the shop opens. I count the money in the till and make up a float of £80.

"We open the shutters at 9am. I'm on the till for most of the day, taking money and helping the customers. We all sit down for our lunch break and have a sandwich, then it's back in the shop until 2.30, when we start to pack up. I get the bus home, do a bit of cleaning and ironing, then get my tea.

Shirley has decorated her

flat to her own taste and keeps it spotlessly clean. "The walls are orange to match the curtains and the sofa. It looks really nice and I like to keep it clean and tidy. I also like cooking at home, I bake cakes, shepherd's pie, roast chicken. I've got my own video and television and music system. I like to play Abba and Celine Dion. I've also got my own computer and I've been on training courses for it. I've actually got 16 computer certificates!

"I go swimming every Wednesday and see my daughter Kimberley maybe once or twice a week."



Keep up the good work Shirley!

Jacqueline McCartney, WRVS Project Manager, says she couldn't do without Shirley. She said: "Shirley does a really good job. She has a positive attitude and takes her work seriously. I'd struggle if she were to leave!"

DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL HOBBY OR INTEREST?

Perhaps you do voluntary work like Shirley, or have a paid job. Tell us about it, or better still send in a photo (see back page for the address). You might be in the next issue of the newsletter!

in this issue...



Page 2

Pushing boundaries



Page 4

All about repairs



Page 6

Your garden

Tell us and win

Lesley Stanworth told us what she thought of our newsletter, and won £50 in shopping vouchers.

Lesley, who lives in Colne, Lancashire, filled in the questionnaire that we sent out with the first edition of our tenants' newsletter in February. We put every questionnaire that was returned into a prize draw, and Lesley was the lucky winner. Lesley told us that she liked getting the newsletter and found it very interesting, and she would like to see more articles about other tenants and their activities in future newsletters. But Lesley was also among just a few other tenants who said they had not found it easy to understand and asked if they could receive it on audio tape as well.

Lynda Mason, Supported Housing Projects Manager said: "A big thank you to everyone who took the time to fill in and return the questionnaire. There's another chance to tell us what you think of this edition of the newsletter, and get entered into the prize draw." If there is more than one tenant in a house who wants to fill in a questionnaire, please ring Lynda on 01772 642161 for more copies.

Below: Kate Child, one of Progress Care Housing Association's Senior Supported Housing Officers presents Lesley Stanworth with her prize



Pushing

Two young people have swapped life in a long stay hospital for a new start in a home of their own.

Since moving into their own house, Andrew Laws and Rita Connor, of Coltishall, Norfolk, are now enjoying a more independent lifestyle and taking part in activities they would not have dreamed of doing before.

Andrew and Rita were among residents of Little Plumstead Hospital in Norwich who needed new homes because the hospital was closing down. Progress Care HA was chosen by Norfolk County Council to provide 11 homes for 33 tenants in partnership with support agencies New Support Options, The Thera Trust and Elizabeth Fitzroy Support.

Once Progress Care HA had identified the right property for Andrew and Rita, they both got involved in getting the house the way they wanted it, choosing their favourite colour schemes, furniture, curtains and even plants for the gardens.

Andrew says he likes his new home because he has a big bedroom, more freedom and can go out more. Rita agrees and says she feels better, calmer and happier in her own house.

Support worker Manny Galea is one of six staff who provide one-to-one support for Rita and Andrew in their new home. He says that the biggest difference between life in the hospital and life in the new house is choice.

He said: "They've got so much choice in everything, the way they want to live their lives, where they want to go, what food they want to eat. Of course there are still limits for their own safety, but they've got more choices than they ever had at the hospital.

"There's me and another six staff and we provide cover 24 hours a day. We're here to support them but they choose what they want to do. We go shopping, they choose their own food, there are no menus like there were at the hospital, they eat what they want.

"Andrew is mad on cars so we go to car parks and scrap yards. Next month he's off to see Simply Red in concert. That's something he would never even have thought about before. Rita goes swimming at least once a week, and horse riding. She's even thinking of starting a newspaper delivery job.



“They’ve got so much choice in everything, the way they want to live their life, where they want to go, what food they want to eat.”

boundaries

“They are both happier and more relaxed, and they are pushing their boundaries all the time. It shows there are hidden talents there that probably got lost, and now they are finding them again.”

Andrew’s parents were concerned about the move to independent living at first, but they are now thrilled with the results. David Laws, Andrew’s dad, said: “We were very sceptical at first but we’ve been absolutely delighted with the outcome. Andrew has really blossomed and made significant progress since the move.”

The long-stay residential wards at Little Plumstead Hospital will close this summer. But Andrew and Rita are opening new doors everyday.

Below: Andrew chats with Support Worker Manny Galea



Above: Andrew and Rita at their new home

Andrew and Rita got involved in getting the house the way they wanted it.

Below: Rita enjoys the garden





Some of our tenants told us in feedback from our first edition of 'Progress People' that they wanted to know more about the repairs service.



All about repairs

Progress Care HA's property division carried out more than 18,000 repairs last year, so we know this area of our service is very important to our customers. This article, and our insert 'How to report a repair' should tell you all you need to know.

Who does what

We look after the structure of your property and any garages and stores that come with it. Responsibility for boundary walls and fencing will depend on ownership. We may also own some of the furnishings and kitchen appliances in your home but these are dealt with differently, by Progress Care supported housing staff.

Repairs Hotline Team

The repairs hotline will be your first port of call for most repairs needed to your home. This dedicated repairs line is open Monday - Thursday from 9.00am to 5.15pm and Friday from 9.00am to 4.45pm Telephone: 01772 642199 Out of Hours (emergency only) 01772 436756



Nicola Boyle
Repairs Hotline
Team Leader



Ian Brooks
Supported
Housing
Hotline
Assistant

Email: Rephotline@newprogress.co.uk

Supported Housing Surveyors



Brian King
Supported
Housing
Surveyor

Telephone Office: 01772 642186
Mobile: 07711100786
Email: bking@newprogress.co.uk



Steve Slater
Supported
Housing
Surveyor

Telephone Office: 01772 642187
Mobile: 07712679180
Email: sslater@newprogress.co.uk

All repairs, except emergency ones, are passed to the surveyors, Brian and Steve, who decide exactly what work needs doing and estimate the cost.

Sometimes it may not be clear what work needs doing, so Brian or Steve may phone you for more information, ask a local contractor to inspect your home on their behalf or visit you themselves. The surveyors also inspect a percentage of completed repairs to check they have been carried out quickly and efficiently. You can also expect to see either Brian or Steve at least once a year when they call to routinely inspect your home.



Paul Smith is the Repairs Operations Manager and has overall responsibility for the repairs and maintenance service of all Progress Housing Group's 4,500 properties including over 400 of our supported housing properties from Dumfries down to Devon. He checks how well our contractors are performing to make sure the repairs service reaches our quality standards, and our customers are satisfied.



Paul Smith
Repairs Operations Manager

Improving the repairs service

We are always striving to make our repairs service even better.

- **We have surveyed all our properties to see what needs doing over the next 25 years to keep them in good condition. We will use this information to draw up more planned maintenance programmes.**
- **We introduced a new computer system in December to speed up the logging of your calls and getting contractors out to the repair.**
- **We restructured the repairs and maintenance sections to make us more efficient.**
- **We now use our own in-house property services contractors to carry out repairs to properties within a 30-mile radius of Leyland.**
- **We are now reviewing our other existing approved contractors.**
- **We have recently bought an electrical contracting business, boosting our workforce to over 60 people.**



Help us and win £20!

Let us know what you think about our repairs service. Return the repair satisfaction reply form (attached to the repairs confirmation sent to you when you order a repair) and you will be entered into our monthly prize draw. The winner receives a £20 gift voucher. It's important that you send in your forms because, apart from the chance to win a prize, the Repairs Operations Manager personally looks at every reply and follows up any concerns with our contractors. The latest winners are: Frederick Prentice of Liverpool (January's draw), Alan Townley of Chorley (February) and Rosemary Hare of Norfolk (March).

You have to be in it to win it, so don't forget to send those repair satisfaction slips back!

Please do! ✓

- **Do report any repairs that need doing promptly to prevent further damage.**

Please don't! ✗

- **Don't say something is an emergency when it isn't, because you will have to pay the full costs involved in doing that repair.**
- **Don't cause damage in your home, or you will be charged the cost of the repair.**

Design the tenants' handbook

Progress Care HA is asking tenants and their support workers to help them design a tenants' handbook. We want the handbook to contain all the information our tenants need and be easy to use.

If you would like to get involved, please contact Lynda Mason, Projects Manager, on 01772 642161.

We've got it taped

Tenants who find it difficult to read the newsletter can ask for a copy to be sent to them on audio tape.

Lynda Mason, Projects Manager, said: "Our newsletter feedback questionnaire revealed that some tenants didn't find the newsletter easy to understand, so we've now recorded it on tape. We are trying to make sure that our newsletter is communicated to as many people as possible so we're looking at whether we need to produce 'Progress People' in other formats as well."

If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter on audio tape, contact Lynda on 01772 642161.

Project Manager, Lynda Mason, and Senior Supported Housing Officer, Frances Aspinall, recording 'Progress People' onto audio tape at Galloways Society for the Blind in Preston



Your garden

Support staff working for Paragon Care UK in Salford contacted 'Progress People' on behalf of their tenants to ask about suitable climbing plants for covering walls in their garden.



We asked Bob McLintock of BM Landscapes in Bolton for some advice. He told us that before you rush and buy your plants, you need to ask yourself:

- **Which way does the wall face - north, south, east or west?**
- **Is it a shady spot or in partial or full sun?**
- **Is the soil acidic or alkaline? (Soil testing kits cost about £2.00.)**
- **Do you want an evergreen, so the wall is covered all year?**
- **Do you want the plant to cover the wall quickly?**
- **Do you want a flowering plant and if so, are fragrant flowers important?**
- **Is it to be grown in a trough?**

There are lots of plants you can choose from, so it is important to read the plant label which tells you where and when to plant, when it will flower and if it is suitable for larger troughs and open trenches. Here are some suggestions:

Plant Name	Try this variety	Tips
Ceanothus Californian Lilac	'Trewithen Blue'	Likes well-drained soil and full sun. Blue flowers in August-September.
Clematis Montana	'Grandiflora'	Very versatile, suited to almost any aspect and climate. According to type chosen, different coloured flowers and flowering periods.
Cotoneaster	'Horizontalis'	Some evergreen types. Suits all soil types. Best in full sun but will thrive in partial shade. White/cream flowers and attractive autumn leaves and red berries.
Honey suckle Lonicera Periclymenum	'Serotina'	Late Dutch honeysuckle. Vigorous grower. Long tubed, fragrant purple flowers fading to yellow in summer. Red berries follow.
Ivy Hedera Helix	'Gold Heart'	Evergreen. No flowers. Grows quickly and anywhere. Most will tolerate shade but variegated types need some sun. Need to prune to keep in check. Suits all soil types.
Jasmine - winter flowering	Jasminum 'Nudiflorum'	Provides splash of yellow colour between November-late February. Suits all soil types. Not suitable for east-facing walls.
Vines (vitus) - ornamental	'Coignetiae'	Likes free-draining soil. Likes sun or partial shade. No flowers. Needs to climb up a trellis. Attractive for its golden and crimson autumn leaves.
Wisteria Floribunda	'Macrobotrys'	Likes a sheltered spot and full sun. Very popular climbing plant. Blue flowers in May and June. Suits all soil types.

Reaching more people

We have spent the last few months strengthening our activities in Scotland, Liverpool, Chorley, South Ribble, Devon and Lincolnshire, all areas we are currently working in.

We extended our work with Brothers of Charity in March and welcomed 34 new tenants into 13 new schemes in the Scottish Borders. We took over 16 previously registered homes in Liverpool and Chorley and created tenancies for the people living there. We also set up three new schemes in Devon with Lifeways, one of our existing support agency partners.

New areas and new partners

We opened our first supported housing schemes in Doncaster in March to provide new homes for 37 tenants. We are looking forward to working with several new support agency partners in 2003 including Acorn in the Chorley and South Ribble areas, Heritage Care and Craegmoor Health Care both in Lincolnshire and Life Prospects and Doncaster and South Humberside Healthcare NHS Trust in Doncaster. During the next year we will also be extending our work with Thera Trust in the Boston area of Lincolnshire, where we will be providing more suitable housing for 28 tenants.

Below: Newly opened property in Doncaster





In the chair

Tony Harrison talks to 'Progress People' about being the Chair of Progress Care HA's Board of Management.



What exactly is the Board of Management?

TONY - Housing Associations are not for profit organisations, run by committees of volunteers. There are 14 people on our Board at the moment who together bring a variety of experience, and they are all committed to providing housing for people who need homes and support to live there. I would like to see the tenant's point of view more directly represented on our Board and one of my aims is to get either a parent or advocate representative helping us make decisions, and hopefully a tenant as well in the not too distant future.

What do you do at Board meetings?

TONY - Before meetings we are sent a number of reports written by staff about lots of different topics. Some reports are just for information but others we will discuss further and make decisions about the future direction of Progress Care HA's work, as part of the Progress Housing Group.

How often does the Board meet?

TONY - The Board meets five to six times a year. As Chair of the Board I also regularly meet with Progress Care HA's Managing Director, Alan Johnson.

Are you paid for being on the Board?

TONY - All members of our Board do the work voluntarily, without pay. However, there is currently a lot of talk nationally about the members of Housing Association boards being paid.

How long have you been on the Board?

TONY - I have served on the Board since Progress Care HA came into being 4 years ago and was elected Chair at the Annual General Meeting last September.

What direction will you be taking PCHA in the next 12 months?

TONY - It's a very exciting time at PCHA at the moment, with business opportunities to the value of £25 million for this coming year. We have recently set up new schemes in West Yorkshire, South Ribble and Devon, thereby strengthening our existing areas of work. I very much welcome our planned approach to tenant participation for the next 12 months, in particular the launch of this newsletter and our 'Welcome Home' video, a guide to our tenancy agreement. I am delighted that 100% of tenants returning the questionnaire about our first newsletter said they liked receiving 'Progress People' and 90% of them had found it an interesting read.

What do you do in your life outside PCHA?

TONY - I have been the Chief Executive of South Ribble Business Venture group since 1997 and before that I worked for 30 years in the motor industry. In my spare time I am also a school governor and board member of a local Citizen's Advice Bureau. My work with Progress Care H.A. very much complements my paid day work, which involves arranging business support to the wider community, particularly disadvantaged groups like the disabled, women and ethnic minorities.

If you, or your advocate, is interested in joining Progress Care HA's Board of Management then please contact Lynda Mason on 01772 642161 for more information.

Below: Progress Care HA's recently acquired property in Chorley, Lancashire



Useful Addresses and Telephone Numbers

HEAD OFFICE

Progress Care Housing Association
Progress House
Lancashire Enterprise Business Park
Centurion Way, Leyland, Lancashire
PR26 6TZ

Tel. 01772 642150

Fax No. 01772 642151

Web: www.progresscare.org.uk

Email: enquiries@newprogress.co.uk

LINCOLN OFFICE

Progress Care Housing Association
1 Sixfields Close
Skellingthorpe Road, Lincoln
Lincolnshire LN6 0EJ

Tel. 01522 507208

Fax No. 01522 507211

REPAIRS

Property Repairs Hotline
Monday - Thursday
9.00 am - 5.15 pm
and Friday 9.00 am - 4.45 pm

Tel. 01772 642199

Out-of-above-hours
(Emergency repairs only)

Tel. 01772 436756

Repairs to furnishings,
kitchen or laundry equipment

Tel. 01772 642150

This newsletter is available on audio tape. For a free copy, please write to Lynda Mason at our head office address above. You can also phone Lynda on 01772 642161 or e-mail her at lmason@newprogress.co.uk

If you need the newsletter in another format or language, or additional copies, please let Lynda know and we may be able to produce it for future editions.

Would you like a pen pal?

The tenant members on our last newsletter advisory panel held in March were interested in starting a 'pen pal notice board' in 'Progress People' where tenants can find a pen pal from among other Progress Care Housing Association tenants.

If you think this is a good idea and you'd like to take part, write to Lynda Mason, Projects Manager at Progress House (see address on the left) and we will start the ball rolling in the autumn issue of 'Progress People'. Tell us your name, address, a few details about yourself and who you might like to write to and we will include your request on a pen pal page in our next newsletter. You may like to send us your photo too. We won't print tenants' addresses; we will act as a 'postbox'



'Progress People' is published by Progress Care Housing Association and sent to our supported housing tenants, support agency partners and service commissioners. If you have anything to say about the newsletter or our service, or a subject you think would make a good article, please get in touch.

You can write to: Lynda Mason, Supported Housing Projects Manager, Progress Care Housing Association, Progress House, Lancashire Enterprises Business Park, Centurion Way, Leyland PR26 6TZ. You can email Lynda at: lmason@newprogress.co.uk or telephone her on 01772 642161.