



**WORK BEGINS AT
BOLAM STREET
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FOR ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

**OUR CUSTOMER
TRIPS ARE
BACK
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**JOIN US FOR
AN ESTATE SPRING
CLEAN
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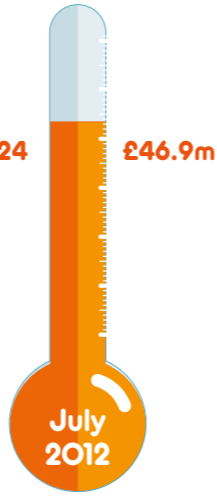
**BUILDING
SAFETY AT
BYKER
PAGE 12**

EASTER HOLIDAY HOURS

During the Easter bank holidays we'll be running our out-of-hours service from 6pm on Thursday 17 April to 8am on Tuesday 22 April. Our out-of-hours service can help you with emergency repairs, reports of anti-social behaviour and rent payments. Just call us on our usual number **0808 164 0111**. MyKarbon is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Our Supported Housing service will remain available during the holidays.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Concierge Service (Byker Wall residents)	0800 772 0519
Employment and Welfare Benefits	0800 533 5442
Housing Benefit / Council Tax (Switchboard)	0191 278 7878



Since July 2012, BCT has invested £45.5m in improvements!

SPRING HAS SPRUNG AND WITH IT COMES OUR LATEST EDITION OF THE BYKER NEWSLETTER.



So much is already happening in and around the estate in 2025. Fencing replacement has commenced throughout Dunn Terrace to create uniformity and privacy, along with the installation of new bin stores to improve waste management and the overall look of the estate. The Dunn Terrace works marks the start of our investment into the environment throughout the estate.

Construction has also started at Bolam Street – turn to page 18 to see some great drone shots of the site in action and the breaking ground event we held with pupils from St Lawrence Primary School.

Following the success of our big estate clean up in September, we're holding another on 29 April. We'll be coming together with colleagues from across Karbon and Newcastle City Council to rid the estate of waste, litter and fly tipping, we'd love for you to join us! Head to page 6 for more information.

After a short winter break, our free customer trips are back. We'll be running two trips throughout the April School holidays, turn to page 4 to find the sign-up QR code.

As part of Karbon's commitment to Byker, we've been working with young people in the community and local artists to create street art throughout the estate. Thanks to funding from Historic England, we've been able to work on more artwork with young people, in collaboration with Foundation Futures and The Farrell Centre. You can find out more about our work with the Farrell Centre on page 8 and all the exhibits, workshops and activities they have on offer.

We've been going behind the scenes with some of our teams including Customer Accounts and Building Safety. Turn to pages 12 and 14 to find out more about the teams' work and how they can help you.

I hope you enjoy the latest edition and have a cracking Easter as well.

Michelle Bell
Assistant Director

LANGUAGES

This information is about Byker Community Trust, part of Karbon Homes. If you'd like this in another format, such as translated or audio version, please let us know!

Arabic	هذه المعلومات عن Byker Community Trust، جزء من Karbon Homes. إذا كنت ترغب بها بصيغة أخرى، مثل نسخة مترجمة أو صوتية، فيرجى إعلامنا!
Slovak	Tieto informácie sa týkajú organizácie Byker Community Trust, ktorá je súčasťou spoločnosti Karbon Homes. Ak si želáte obdržať tieto informácie v inom formáte, napríklad v preloženej alebo zvukovej verzii, dajte nám prosím vedieť!
Farsi	این اطلاعات درباره بایکر کامیونیتی تراست (Byker Community Trust)، که بخشی از کاربون هومز (Karbon Homes) است، می باشد. اگر مایل هستید این مطلب را در قالب دیگری، مانند نسخه ترجمه شده یا صوتی دریافت کنید، لطفاً به ما اطلاع دهید.
French	Ces informations concernent le Byker Community Trust, qui fait partie de Karbon Homes. Si vous souhaitez obtenir ce document dans un autre format, par exemple traduit ou dans une version audio, faites-le nous savoir !
Czech	Tyto informace se týkají organizace Byker Community Trust, která je součástí společnosti Karbon Homes. Pokud byste chtěli tyto informace v jiném formátu, například v přeložené nebo zvukové verzi, dejte nám prosím vědět!
Polish	Niniejsza informacja dotyczy Byker Community Trust, części Karbon Homes. Jeśli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać tę informację w innym formacie, np. w tłumaczeniu lub w wersji audio, proszę dać nam znać!
Portuguese	Esta informação é sobre Byker Community Trust, parte da Karbon Homes. Se desejar esta informação noutra formato, por exemplo a versão traduzida ou em áudio, por favor informe-nos!

FRONT COVER PHOTO:
We were joined by St Lawrence Primary School Pupils to celebrate the start of construction at our Bolam Street development.

DIDN'T GET YOUR COPY OF THE MAGAZINE?

You can subscribe or unsubscribe at any time, or if you'd like it in another format, such as translated or audio version, let us know!

INTRODUCING OUR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We're pleased to introduce the newest members of our committee.



MD Hamid joins us as a Customer Committee Member and Silvie Fisch has taken on an Independent Committee Member role.

As part of Karbon Homes, the Byker Estate has its own dedicated Byker Community Trust Committee.



Our committee is made up of 12 members including a minimum of four customers. They are responsible for overseeing the quality of services delivered by Karbon and ensuring the Community Pledge is delivered.

Committee Members give their time, skills and expertise to help us achieve our strategic objectives.

APRIL TRIPS

After a short winter break, our trips are back.

We're running two trips to Lilidorei at The Alwick Garden in the April school holidays.

Lilidorei, is a magical village ruled by Lord Elfwyn from high up in his tower Elfwyn Drin (which happens to be the largest play structure in the world, don't you know!). Lilidorei is home to nine clans – some friendly, some troublesome, who spend the entire year preparing for Christmas.

The trip will also include entry into The Alwick Garden. For your chance to join us, scan the QR code with your mobile phone camera and signup using our digital form.



DISCOVER SEVEN STORIES THIS SPRING



Seven Stories, the National Centre for Children's Books is just a short walk away from the Byker Estate.

A hub of creativity and imagination, the centre currently has three free exhibitions on offer, exploring some of the most iconic children's books and authors throughout recent history.

You can find permanent exhibitions surrounding author Judith Kerr's work including *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* and *Mog the Forgetful cat*, as well as a brand

FREE EXHIBITS THIS SPRING



new multi-sensory exhibition *Elmer and Friends: the Colourful World of David McKee*. The new exhibit brings McKee's work to life with interactive mirrored walkways, textures, sounds and vibrant colours. Families can explore his illustrations up close with magnifying glasses, while children can lose themselves in the playfulness of his imaginative worlds.

STEPNEY WESTERN

Stepney Western, a free exhibition featuring a new film by Newcastle-based artist/filmmaker Harry Lawson and archival photography is coming to Newcastle Contemporary Art (NCA).

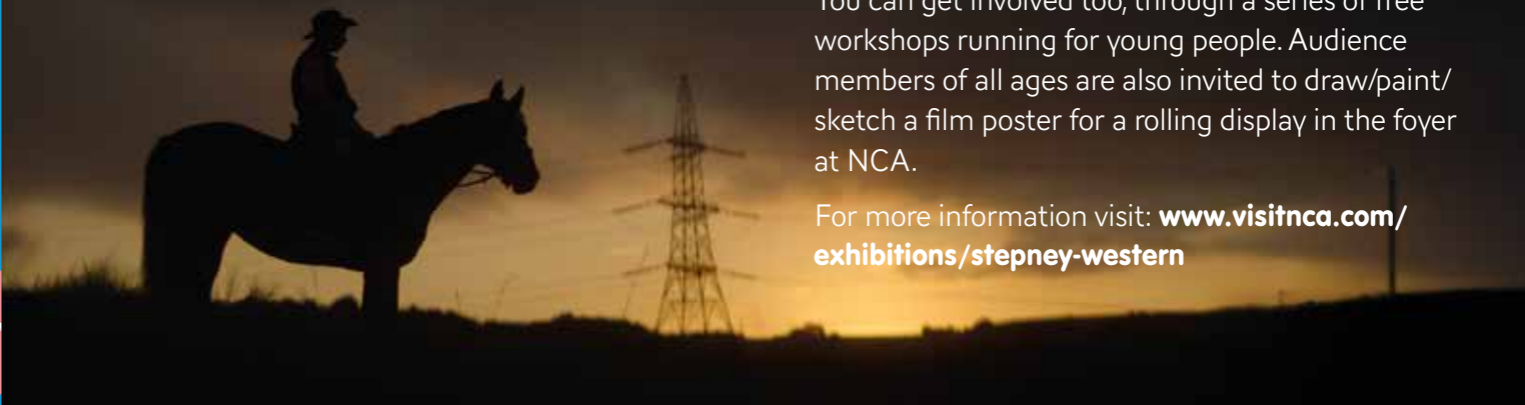
At the heart of Stepney Western is Lawson's documentary, made over the past two years in collaboration with a group of young inner city horse riders from Stepney Bank Stables in Byker.

The documentary creates a portrait of the community from different generations, combining footage from the 2004 CBBC series *The Stables* (made with teenagers at Stepney 20 years ago) along with iPhone clips shot by the riders, archival material from North East Film Archive and Lawson's own footage.

A large-scale public artwork has also been installed at Byker Metro Station, paying tribute to the exhibition.

You can get involved too, through a series of free workshops running for young people. Audience members of all ages are also invited to draw/paint/sketch a film poster for a rolling display in the foyer at NCA.

For more information visit: www.visitnca.com/exhibitions/stepney-western





Want to join us? scan the QR code to sign up!



CCTV/enforcement project coming soon
 G&A Security will be on site in April installing 34 temporary cameras across the estate to help us combat illegal flytipping on the estate and take forward enforcement action

ESTATE SPRING CLEAN

Back in September, we held a day of action in collaboration with Newcastle City Council to tackle waste on the estate.

The event proved a success with huge amounts of waste, litter and fly tipping being removed from the estate. We're hoping to repeat this success with another day of action where we'll be joined by the council and our colleagues on Tuesday 29 April.

Led by Karbon's Grounds Maintenance Team, we'll be working together to once again rid the estate of litter and fly tipping. We will be meeting at the BCT Office, 17 Raby Cross at 9am and will have litter picking equipment available on the day if you would like to join us.

We will also be providing eight skips throughout the estate so you can dispose of bulkier household waste.

Skips will be placed in the following locations:

- Chirton Wynd
- Ayton Rise
- Garmonds Way
- Northumberland Terrace
- Brinkburn House
- Cheviot Mount
- Raby Way (at the rear)
- Felton Green




Banish your bulky items

Spring is often seen a great time to have a clear out ready for the arrival of a new season. But sometimes disposing of our unwanted items isn't as simple as putting them into the recycling or general waste bin.

Bulkier items such as furniture or white goods, like fridges, can be difficult to dispose of, especially if you don't have access to a larger vehicle.

We've put a helpful guide of what services are available to you around Byker, meaning you can have a successful spring clean, and help the environment too.

Be careful

There are businesses that offer to take your bulkier items away for a cost. Whilst many of these are legitimate and will dispose of your waste correctly, some don't and will dump it illegally.

This is known as fly-tipping, and if you can be linked back to your waste, you may face action against you and even a fine. Don't let your good intentions get you into trouble.

Donate

Do you have unwanted items, such as furniture, that could still be used by someone else?

There are some great ways you can donate furniture to give them a new lease of life and create space in your home.

Organisations such as the British Heart Foundation offer free collection appointments for bulky items, for example furniture. To see if you can book a collection, and to find out more on what they can and cannot collect, head to www.bhf.org.uk

Local authority collections

Newcastle City Council offer bulky waste collections. Bulky waste items are domestic waste items that you cannot dispose of in your general waste bin.

Bulky waste could include things like:

- heavy items such as a sofa.
- large items such as domestic white goods including fridges, washing machines and cookers.
- smaller items such as an ironing board or a TV unit.

Head to <https://new.newcastle.gov.uk/recycling-waste/bulky-waste-collection> to find out more.

Newcastle City Council also offer free collections for small electrical items, which can usually be difficult to dispose of.

Recycling Centres

Or more commonly known as "the tip" are your one stop shop for recycling household waste.



The council's Byker Household Waste Recycling Centre will take the majority of household waste.

Open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Sunday, you do not need to book an appointment to visit. You will need to take proof of being a Newcastle resident with you, for example a council tax bill, and a form of photo ID such as a passport.

You can find out more by visiting the council website: <https://new.newcastle.gov.uk/recycling-waste/household-waste-recycling-centres>

THE FARRELL CENTRE: EXPLORING THE CITY'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

Located in our very own city of Newcastle, the Farrell Centre explores the past present and future of the region's architecture through an ongoing series of event and activities.



There's something for everyone to learn and enjoy about architecture. See the round-up below for what free events and activities are on this year.

CONCRETE DREAMS

September 2024 – June 2025

A project exploring the ways Tyneside was transformed during 1960s and 1970s and how we might reimagine the city of today.

COMING SOON

CONCRETOPIA'S AND BEYOND

10 April – 31 August 2025

A display of work created by school children, including Year Five Byker Primary students, as part of a project exploring the ways their relationship to where they live, has been shaped by the developments of the 1960's and 1970's.

THE FIGHT FOR BYKER AND OTHER STORIES

6 February – 1 June 2025

The display explores the 1960's work of the Byker Study Group in shaping the development of the Byker Estate and focuses on the 'pre-redevelopment' period in Byker's history through photographs, artefacts and voices of those from the heart of the transformation.

Visitors are invited to contribute to the installation by bringing old photographs, negatives or slides that can be scanned and added to a photo memory wall.

www.farrellcentre.org.uk/whats-on/the-fight-for-byker/

EVENTS:

BYKER ARCHIVE HANDLING SESSIONS

Saturday 29 March, 2-4pm

Saturday 24 May, 2-4pm

These sessions, run by Byker resident Silvie Fisch, will provide unique access to original photographs, plans and documents relating to the Byker redevelopment.

FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

Little Builders – second Thursday of the month

Little Builders is the Farrell Centre's programme for pre-school children, toddlers, infants and their parents. Activities will include sensory play, den building, arts and crafts and story time. Suitable for 7+ months/crawling stage upwards.

<https://www.farrellcentre.org.uk/whats-on/little-builders-7/>

Planning Fun – first Sunday of the month

Each month a member of The Farrell Centre team will lead a creative, hands-on session tackling a different idea relating to city making, everything from playgrounds to public transport.

<https://www.farrellcentre.org.uk/whats-on/planning-fun-5/>

Virtual Builders: Minecraft Club – every other Saturday

This bi-weekly club will explore the potential of Minecraft as a tool to understand architecture, design and city planning. Farrell Centre staff will set Minecraft design and build challenges for participants and offer a space for gamers and their parents to come together and share the worlds they have created

<https://www.farrellcentre.org.uk/whats-on/virtual-builders-minecraft-club-20/>



The Farrell Centre
Eldon Place,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
NE1 7RD
United Kingdom

FREE ENTRY
Open Thursday -
Sunday,
10am-5pm
Picnic area available
for packed
lunches.

STREET ART CONTINUES THROUGHOUT BYKER!

As part of our ongoing partnership with ELEMENTS Street Art Festival, we have received a £14,560 grant from Historic England.

This is part of the 'History in the Making' programme to help bring to life the social history of the Byker estate through art.

Delivered in collaboration with the specialist youth service Foundation Futures, the Farrell Centre at Newcastle University and Northern Cultural Projects



CIC, the project is working specifically with young people living on the estate. The aim is to provide them with a creative outlet to celebrate Byker's history, as well as its vision for the future.

GIVE IT A GROW

With spring in full swing, it's a wonderful time to utilise your garden space. Whether you have a balcony or garden, there's so many ways you can make the most of your outdoor space.

Michael, who lives in Tom Collins House, regularly uses the communal garden to grow produce, as well as at his own allotment. He has put together his top tips for you to make the most of your outdoor space – no matter how big or small.

Getting the basics

Aside from your plants or seeds and compost, all you really need to get started is a trowel, fork and spade. These will make it easier for you to prepare the area you are planting in and maintain your crops.

Making the most of your space

Herbs such as rosemary, thyme and oregano are great to grow in spaces like window boxes and plant pots. You can grow them easily from seeds or plants and they are handy for cooking and great to share with neighbours.

Salad leaves, like rocket, suit being grown in small spaces like plant pots and aren't very high maintenance.

Balconies if in a sunny spot can be a suitable place to grow tomatoes, which is often difficult without a greenhouse.

Using bigger spaces

If you have a garden area that's big enough to plant into the ground, there's a few important things to remember:

Crop rotation:

To better your chances of successfully growing vegetables, you need to have at least three different areas that you can grow in. You will need to rotate what you grow in these spaces every year to reduce the spread of disease.

If you can only grow in pots, you will need to regularly replace the compost to avoid disease.

Keep the bugs at bay:

Slugs and snails are notorious for destroying crops so it's important to keep an eye on your plants and remove any that you find nearby.

Utilise your space:

Cupboard staples like potatoes thrive in bigger growing spaces, plus they're easy to grow. Just make sure you chit them before planting. Chitting is the process of allowing the potatoes to sprout before planting which gives them a better chance at growing.

Chit process:

You can chit seed potatoes by arranging them, within egg boxes or seed trays in light in a cool but frost-free room.

They are ready for planting when the sprouts have reached 2cm in length, which will take approximately four–six weeks.

Patience is key:

Don't be disheartened if you don't see progress in a short time – potatoes can take up to six months to grow to their full potential!



DONNA'S NEW START

In the past three months alone, our Foundations for Life Team have worked with 36 Byker customers, with 20 moving into work, education or training. This includes New Start, a programme offering five to six month paid work placements to social housing customers across the region



Donna, a Karbon customer recently completed her New Start placement at our Byker Office, as a Neighbourhood Housing Assistant.

Her journey hasn't stopped there – she's successfully been able to turn her placement into a permanent role, thanks to the invaluable experience she gained through it.

“Before New Start, I was working as a cleaner. I was checking for new jobs online and I accidentally found the programme through my landlord, Karbon. It felt like fate, and despite there not being a guaranteed role at the end, I decided to go for it.”

Donna has been working as a Neighbourhood Housing Assistant in the Byker office.

“The interview process was straightforward. I received lots of support and it felt easy.”

Throughout Donna's placement, she has been able to work in a role she had not done previously and has been able to gain a large range of skills.

“My placement has been brilliant, I've been able to learn lots, especially using online systems, which I

had little experience of before. Housing has been a completely new area to learn too and being able to help people is very rewarding.

“I love working with people and I'm a team player, so this environment has been great for me. I now feel very confident in my role.”

Towards the end of Donna's placement, a permanent position as a Neighbourhood Housing Assistant became available, which Donna was successful in securing.

“I'm very happy to be working for Karbon in Byker permanently. I love my job, working with the team here in the Byker Office, and the challenges the role brings.

“Compared to my last job, I feel more relaxed, have time for breaks and have an overall better work/life balance.

“I'm looking forward to my career's future, and for now would like to stay in housing. There's lots of room for progression with my role and within Karbon.”



New Start will be back this year. No experience or qualifications are needed for the roles, plus you'll receive support from an employment advisor throughout the programme.

You can register your interest by visiting www.new-start.co.uk and completing our form.



BUILDING SAFETY AT BYKER

Meet Liam and Mark from our Building Safety Team. They're the familiar faces around the estate, and we asked them about their roles in keeping you safe and the unique challenges of the Byker Wall.

Q: Can you both introduce yourselves and explain your roles at Byker?

Liam: Hi, I'm the Building Safety and Compliance Coordinator. I handle tasks like checking and updating information boxes, fireman's switches, coordinating with contractors and overseeing safety projects.

Mark: Hello, I'm the Building Safety Manager, a role created in response to the Building Safety Act. I focus on fire and structural safety in our high-rise buildings. To do this, we work with colleagues and other stakeholders such as the Fire Service to ensure that we manage all possible risks.

Q: How does Byker Wall's design impact your work?

Mark: Byker Wall's design, layout, size, and construction materials present unique challenges. It's Grade II* listed with hundreds of balconies and complex layouts, making navigation tricky, especially during emergencies. This is why we've installed wayfinding signage that glows in the dark.

Q: What challenges do you face maintaining safety at Byker?

Liam: Waste management and fly-tipping pose fire risks. Residents should dispose of waste properly and contact their Neighbourhood Housing Officer if unsure.

Mark: The risk from e-bikes and e-scooters with lithium-ion batteries is growing. It's crucial for residents to follow safety advice to keep themselves and their neighbours safe.

Q: How do you engage with residents to promote safety awareness?

Liam: We share information and leaflets around Byker Wall. Estate walkabouts with housing officers are great for residents to ask questions and raise concerns.

Mark: We've created a Building Safety Panel with Byker residents who provide valuable feedback. Some of us even spent time at Byker Fire Station to learn about emergency responses. Residents are the eyes and ears around their buildings, and we encourage more involvement in building safety.

Q: What recent safety improvements have you implemented at Byker?

Liam: We've added more noticeboards to keep residents updated on building safety. We've collected more asset data, including surveys of communal cupboards, roof access points, and fire safety equipment.

Mark: We've improved information available to the Fire Service and conducted extensive surveys with structural engineers. Recent upgrades include better smoke alarms and more frequent fire door checks.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your work at Byker?

Liam: I love the variety in the role and seeing the positive impact of our safety changes.

Mark: I'm proud to manage building safety at Karbon, especially given Byker Wall's uniqueness. It's rewarding to see the positive impact and work with dedicated colleagues. My first involvement at Byker was 25 years ago, and it's great to be part of its safety journey.

Q: Any last thoughts or advice for our readers?

Liam: Check out our fire safety page on the Karbon Homes website for useful info and videos.

Mark: Always be mindful of your safety and report any concerns. Join our Building Safety Panel for exciting opportunities. Contact Stacey Close on **0784 148 2504** or email connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk

BUILDING EXCELLENT SERVICE TOGETHER

Providing the best possible customer service is a top priority for us and it's important that we understand how we're doing.

We sat down with our Head of Customer Experience, Ashley Wallace to see how we've been continuing to deliver excellent customer service with our Building Excellent Service Together (BEST) project.

Hi Ashley, could you tell us more about the BEST project?

We set off on our BEST journey, under the guidance of the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) back in 2021, and in 2022 we were delighted to be recognised for providing excellent customer service.

To make sure we're still delivering this level of service, we surveyed 500 customers in September 2024 to see how we're performing, where we've improved and which areas we still need to work on.

What insights did you get from customers?

I'm pleased to say that we've seen positive improvements in many areas including complaints. However, we know this is an area we need to continue to focus on.

The results also show that customers are most happy with our colleagues, with high scores coming through around the competence and helpfulness of our teams.

We already know how dedicated our teams are to providing an excellent service, but to see this coming through from customers is fantastic.

What actions are Karbon taking now that you have this feedback?

We're working on the actions we can take to improve how we handle complaints and in other areas we didn't score as well in.

What happens next?

Once we have the new actions confirmed, we will combine these into the existing BEST action plan to show the continuous improvements we have been making to our customer and colleague services.

This action plan will be submitted to the ICS along with our survey results. We'll be sharing the outcome of this work in the spring. Keep an eye out for more information on our website.



Ashley Wallace, Head of Customer Experience.

STARTING YOU OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT



You may think that our Customer Accounts Team is just here to collect your rent. But there's so much more they can do for you. We caught up with Charlotte Williamson, one of our Customer Accounts Officers, to find out more.

Hi Charlotte, can you tell us how your team support our customers?

We're here to help customers sustain their tenancy. We can work with you to understand your circumstances and find the right payment methods or frequency of payments, making sure your income is maximised as well as looking at all the various support options that we can offer.

It's about creating a good relationship with each other so we can get you off on the right foot, provide support along the way if you need it and, if you do fall behind with your payments, get you back on track as soon as we can.

When might a customer come to you for support?

It could be when there's change in circumstance that could impact their income or their household. Things such as a relationship breaking down, having children or losing a job – they can all create financial pressures.

There are things we can do to support you. For example, when we ran a winter wellness campaign last year, one customer got in touch because she was struggling with the cost of Christmas.

We were able to put her in touch with our Money Matters Team who arranged a supermarket voucher for her and were able to find support to help her pay her gas and electricity bills. They also gave her advice on how she could start making savings to help her in the future.

What's your favourite part about the job?

It's great to see someone turn their circumstances around. You can create strong relationships with customers in this role and make a difference to their lives.

I know it can be daunting to talk about financial problems, but the sooner customers get in touch with us and help us get to the root cause of the issue, the sooner we can find ways to help them and make sure they know they're not alone.

How can customers get in touch if they need support?

We'll reach out to customers in the first week of their tenancy to introduce ourselves and see if there's anything we can support them with.

If there's ever anything we need to talk about, we'll give you a call. You can choose to speak to our friendly team then and there or give us a call back when the time suits you. We'll even send you a text message with our details on to make it nice and easy to get in touch with us.

If there's something you want to discuss, you can call **0800 164 0111**, email info@karbonhomes.co.uk or use MyKarbon to get in touch.

We're also available to visit you in your home if you would benefit from that face-to-face contact.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT – ANNUAL RENT CHANGES

If you receive Universal Credit (UC), from 7 April 2025 you will receive a new 'to-do' in your UC Journal asking you to 'Confirm your housing costs'.

All the details you need to complete this will be in the letter we've sent you about changes to your rent for the upcoming year. Please do not update your rent details before the 7 April 2025. You'll get a text message from us with your UC details, as a reminder, nearer the time.

If you're on a Monthly Tenancy, the date you need to update your charges may not be the 7 April 2025. You can check this in the rent letter we've sent you.

If you no longer have your rent change letter, you can contact our Customer Relations Team by emailing enquiries@bykerct.co.uk or calling **0800 533 5442**.

Your tenancy agreement will tell you what type of tenancy you are on but if you aren't sure, please contact our Customer Relations Team.

DON'T FORGET...

At Byker we have our very own dedicated Tenancy Sustainment and Welfare Reform Officer, Aneta.

Aneta can help you with any questions or concerns you may have about your financial circumstances, and help you with seeking support.

To get in touch call **0800 533 5442** and enquiries@bykerct.co.uk.



WE HAD SOME GREAT FEEDBACK FROM ATTENDEES AS WELL:

“It gave a sense of belonging to Karbon community.”

Gordon

“The stalls were brilliant and there was a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.”

Marge

“There was an open and honest approach from Karbon and I enjoyed getting the opportunity to network too.”

Jaci



We're aiming for events like this to become a regular feature in our Resident Involvement calendar, with even more of our customers attending each year.

Customers that were invited are part of our Resident Involvement Framework. They engage with us as part of a panel, a forum, a volunteer or are part of a group hosted by Karbon or Byker.

If you would like to take part in future events like this, view our dedicated website page www.karbonhomes.co.uk/get-involved or connect with a member of the Customer Involvement Team by emailing connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk.

A SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE KARBON COMMUNITY

Last November we held our first customer conference. Phil Pollard, our Assistant Director of Customer and Community Engagement, tells us more about the event.

It was a fantastic opportunity to bring together customers, colleagues and partners to hear about what is going on in the world of housing, our approach to customer service and an overview of our finances.

Over 130 customers attended, and we were able to give them updates from members of our Executive Team, showcase various support services that assist our customers and our communities, and have a fun quiz. There was also a game of Budget Bingo which allowed

customers to discover how we spend our money, along with an opportunity to browse stalls with some of our partner organisations, including The Fans Museum, Nexus, Newcastle United Foundation and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue.

It was wonderful to see everyone in one room and it allowed customers to voice issues, suggest improvements and learn more about how their money is spent.

JOIN OUR READERS PANEL

Would you like to give feedback on Karbon, get a behind the scenes look at what's going on and do this all from the comfort of your own home?

Then we have the opportunity for you!

We're looking for customers to join our Readers Panel to have their say on important Karbon policies and let us know how we can improve them.

You don't need to meet up anywhere, we'll contact you with the information and you can provide your feedback in your own time in whichever way is easiest for you. David from Gateshead is part of the Readers Panel and gets a lot out of the experience:

“I do it because I like to keep up to date with any changes which may be relevant to me, to make sure it's

not full of jargon set out to confuse people and to know my rights.

“I think people should take part because it sharpens your mind and gives you a chance to have your say. Give it a go and believe me you'll feel you've contributed in some small way to improve things.”

If you're interested in joining the Readers Panel, contact our Customer Engagement Team at connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk.



KEEPING YOU SAFE IN YOUR HOMES

In March we completed our new fob roll out, where customers who access their homes through communal entrances received brand new fobs.

By replacing these fobs we're able to make sure fobs stay with our customers, keeping you and your homes safe and secure as possible.

We want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding whilst we carried out the switchover.

WORK STARTS ON THE DUNN TERRACE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Fencing replacement works throughout the Dunn Terrace neighbourhood officially started in February. The fencing will provide a new sense of privacy for customers and will improve the overall look of the neighbourhood. New communal bin stores are also being installed, with the aim of promoting recycling facilities and creating more efficient, tidier waste disposal areas on the estate.



BOLAM STREET

Work is underway at Bolam Street. We were joined by pupils from St Lawrence Primary school to celebrate the start the construction. The event marked the first steps of construction, which will see 24 new homes on the estate – the first new builds since 1982.



FIRE SERVICE

We can finally start looking forward to welcoming the spring and summer months, including the Easter holidays.

While we know, the majority of our customers - young and old - make a positive contribution to the estate, unfortunately we do see an increase in anti-social behaviour during the lighter nights.

It's important you are aware of your child's whereabouts and activities. We appreciate this can be difficult, and the service works closely with us and our partners to try and reduce anti-social behaviour throughout the area.

To avoid opportunities for wheelie bin fires, please bring in your bin after collection and keep it stored securely. Always remember you can anonymously report any fire-setting activity to FireStoppers on **0800 169 5558**.

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Q3 OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2024

Our aim is to give you the service you expect all day, every day, 365 days a year. We try hard to avoid problems, but sometimes we do make mistakes. If you receive a poor service, then please tell us about it so we have the opportunity to put things right. We greatly appreciate your time and view any feedback

as an opportunity to improve our services. We're always listening and ready to work hard to resolve your concerns straight away. We received 13 compliments and 34 complaints in Q3 from customers regarding the service they received from us.

Number, Nature, Outcome

13 COMPLIMENTS

34 COMPLAINTS



- Compliance
- Foundations for Life
- Housing Management
- Responsive Repairs
- Customer Relationship
- Anti-Social Behaviour - Colleague
- Money Matters
- Housing - Estate Management
- Housing - Welfare Support
- Digital Customer Experience

COMPLAINTS UPHELD

Upheld	22
Not Upheld	5
Partially Upheld	7

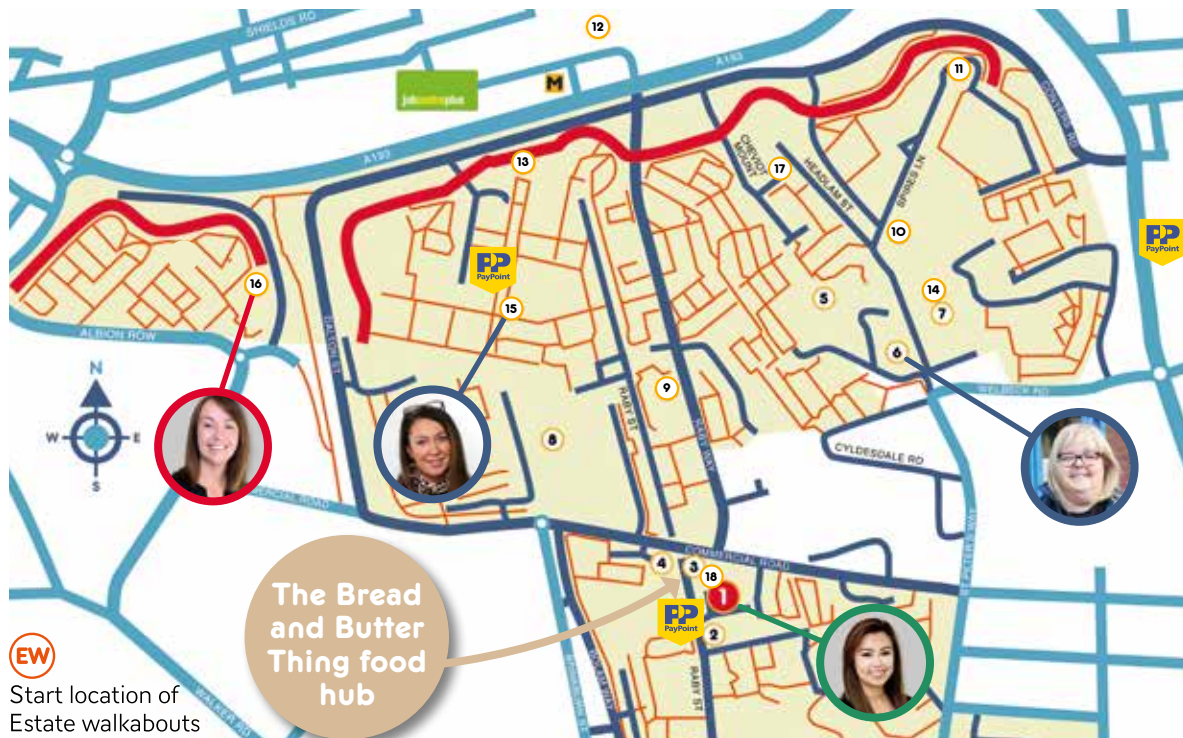
Upheld: A complaint is considered as 'upheld' when the investigation into the complaint found that BCT made mistakes or provided a poor service to the customer.

Not upheld: A complaint is considered as 'not upheld' when the investigation into the complaint found that BCT acted correctly in providing the service to the customer.

Partially upheld: A complaint is considered as 'partially upheld' when BCT agrees that the complaint was justified in at least one element of the complaint.

Ways to contact us:

- Face-to-face with any member of staff, including contractors working on BCT's behalf.
- Call our Customer Service Team on **0800 533 5442 (option 3)** 9am-5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am-4.30pm Fridays.
- Email our Customer Services Team at: enquiries@bykerct.co.uk
- Write to our local office address: Byker Community Trust, 17 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF
- BCT website and social media via Facebook.
- Via a Councillor, MP or other third party.



EW

Start location of Estate walkabouts

The Bread and Butter Thing food hub

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Byker Community Trust office Freephone 0800 533 5442 | 10 St. Lawrence's Primary School Call 0191 265 9881 |
| 2 Children and Families Newcastle East – Byker Sands Centre Call 0191 275 9636 | 11 St. Lawrence's Church |
| 3 ACANE Community Centre and The Bread and Butter Thing Call 0191 265 8110 | 12 East End Library and Pool Call 0191 277 4100 |
| 4 St. Michael's Church Centre Raby Cross | 13 Climb Newcastle |
| 5 St. Michael's Church Headlam Street | 14 Chirton House |
| 6 Former Byker Community Centre | 15 Ralph Erskine House |
| 7 Byker Village Bowling Green | 16 Tom Collins House |
| 8 Byker Primary School Call 0191 265 6906 | 17 Mount Pleasant |
| 9 Avondale House (Veterans' Support) | 18 Byker Pantry |

How to contact Byker Community Trust:

- Call: **0800 533 5442**
- Option 1: Repairs (also for out of hours emergencies)
- Option 2: Rent Enquiries
- Option 3: Housing Enquiries
- Option 4: Business Enquiries

- enquiries@bykerct.co.uk
- www.bykercommunitytrust.org
- bykercommunitytrust



Part of **Karbon**

