

LIMELIGHT

Salix Homes Magazine

2019-2020

INSIDE:

Your community
heroes

Love your
neighbourhood

Investing in
your homes

Milestone
moments

100 YEARS
OF SOCIAL HOUSING

Centenarian Irene raises
a glass to 100 years of
social housing

salix h:mes

A WELCOME FROM OUR CEO

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FSC provides global standards for forest management, which cover environmental, social and economic aspects. The well-being of forest communities and ecosystems is as important as replacing trees, and FSC is the only wood certification scheme endorsed by WWF, Greenpeace and The Woodland Trust.

A welcome from our CEO

The past year has been a monumental one for us, we've created new affordable housing, improved homes and communities and hosted yet another successful Love Your Neighbourhood Week.

This year, we've seen many of you do great things for your community: driving change, bringing people together, creating opportunities and tackling important issues.

All of these have made - and continue to make - a real difference. So, once, again we are celebrating your achievements.

Visit pages 4-5 to meet the Reverend who's become a real driver for change in the community.

Celebrate our community heroes on pages 6-9, meet our inspirational cover lady Irene on pages 20-21 and flick to pages 22-23 to meet Alex*, who has bravely spoken out about his battle with mental illness.

If you've not already done so, don't forget to sign up to a MySalix online account to get a monthly e-newsletter delivered straight to your inbox to keep you up-to-date with news, events and information in your neighbourhood.

You can sign up at
www.mysalix.co.uk

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Lee Sugden

“THE PAST
YEAR HAS
BEEN A
MONUMENTAL
ONE FOR US”





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“THIS IS A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE FEEL LOVED AND VALUED”

The Reverend Christine Threlfall is a force to be reckoned with in Broughton.

Since joining St James Church in 2016, she's become a real driver for change in the community.

From feeding the homeless and tackling isolation amongst the elderly to teaching families how to cook, Rev Christine, the church leadership and her team of volunteers are successfully uniting a polarised community.

Every week, the church welcomes hundreds of people through its doors to its successful lunch club and food pantry, which serves up a free hot meal to anyone who stops by.

Whether you're young, old, homeless, lonely or struggling with mental health, everyone is made to feel welcome, as the group serves more than 100 meals and 600 cups of tea every week.

The church's food pantry, which runs alongside the lunch club, provides a further 50 families with 10 essential food items for just £2.50.

Rev Christine explained: “This is a place where all the people of Broughton are welcome, and they know they are loved and valued.

“Some people need the food and some people just need the company and someone to talk to. We never take any money at the lunch club as it's important that everyone is on the same level here and treated exactly the same.

“If we weren't here there'd be at least 50 families that would be struggling to put food on their table.”

But it's not just the lunch club, Rev Christine has set up a packed agenda of weekly clubs and initiatives to bring people together.

There's a computer club, an inter-faith women's group, family cooking sessions, a men's mental health group and a music club.

Rev Christine added: “There's an awful lot of isolation in our community. We're very diverse, but the groups are quite polarised and it's been a real joy to start some new groups and activities that bring people together.

“Loneliness and isolation is as damaging to health as heart disease and being able to bring people together around a meal or a cup of tea and being a place of welcome, really gives you that feel-good factor.”

All the activities are run from the church hall, but with its tiny kitchen, out-dated facilities and paint-peeling walls, it's been a struggle to cope with the demand - until now.

Salix Homes has been a proud supporter of St James' Church over the years, but now we've teamed up with our partner contractor Emanuel Whittaker to makeover the church hall, ripping out the old kitchen and fitting a brand new one, refurbishing the toilets and giving the hall a fresh lick of paint.

Rev Christine added: “The old kitchen was a real struggle to work with - there was only one work surface, the sink was too small and we had no plug sockets.

“As you can imagine it was really difficult cooking Christmas dinner for 40 people who would otherwise be on their own, off a single oven and four rings - it was about as near as impossible as you could get.

“ IF WE WEREN'T HERE
THERE'D BE AT LEAST 50
FAMILIES THAT WOULD BE
STRUGGLING TO PUT
FOOD ON THEIR TABLE ”

Rev Christine

“The new kitchen has made a massive difference - we would never turn someone away, but we were really struggling for capacity. Now we can help so many more people, which will have a real impact on people's physical, emotional and mental health as we can serve more meals and bring more people together.”

It's clear that Rev Christine and the church leadership are making a huge difference in the community, providing a lifeline for those who need it most, but she says it couldn't be done without her team of trusty volunteers, and the support of Salix Homes.

She added: “From zero volunteers two years ago we now have a team of eight and they are an absolute delight. One of the best things about doing this is seeing the volunteers grow - they usually start as a guest, get to know everyone and hopefully feel valued.

“Every person has got a gift of some type, so every person is of infinite worth to us. Seeing our volunteers grow in confidence, health and wellbeing is an amazing thing.

“But none of this would have been possible without Salix Homes, and we are just so grateful for this partnership which is helping us to provide for the community.”

Watch our video
about St James
Lunch Club and
Food pantry on
YouTube.



Reverend Christine Threlfall.



Follow St James Church Broughton on Facebook to keep up to date with their upcoming events and activities.



MEET OUR SPRINGBOARD HEROES

We've channelled more than £84,000 during 2018-19 into dozens of local groups and initiatives across Salford that are making a difference in communities.

Springboard
HEROES

From children's drama clubs and bowling teams, to youth groups and dance troupes; Our Springboard fund has provided much-needed cash injections to local projects that boost community spirit, promote health and wellbeing, reduce isolation and improve the environment.

Once again, we've picked four fantastic projects as finalists in our second annual Springboard Heroes Awards, and the winner, as voted by the public, has been awarded an additional £1,000 cash boost. The three runners up also received £100 each.

Sue Sutton, our executive director of operations, said: "The Springboard Heroes is our way of honouring some of the fantastic work that ordinary people in Salford are doing day in, day out; and it's projects like these that make our communities so special.

"We had close to 1,000 votes this year, and while there can only be one winner, they're all heroes in our eyes and we're proud to support them all."

Read on to find out more about our inspiring finalists, who are changing lives for people in Salford.



“ WE’RE INCREDIBLY PROUD OF OUR SPRINGBOARD GRANT PROGRAMME, WHICH HAS PROVIDED A LIFELINE FOR DOZENS OF FANTASTIC GROUPS AND PROJECTS, WHICH ARE REALLY MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SALFORD ”



Runners up Friends of Green Grosvenor Park children's drama club.

Our runners up...



Peel Park parkrun

Every week thousands of runners across the world descend on their local parks for the international running phenomenon that is parkrun.



A group of local volunteers wanted to bring the free, 5k timed running event, which is organised entirely by volunteers, to Salford's Peel Park.

Alia Pike, who is event director of Peel Park parkrun, said: "This is a beautiful park and we want it to be used by lots of people. It's a great free event, and we think it'd be lovely to have people come to the park every Saturday and run around it.

"Despite the huge amount of housing around Peel Park - including private, social and student homes - so many residents don't make the most of it. The hope is that parkrun will change that, helping to instil in residents a sense of ownership over this beautiful area."



Alia Pike is helping bring parkrun to Peel Park

Audacious Foundation

Audacious Foundation is a charity created to tackle some of the biggest issues faced by the communities of Greater Manchester, including poverty and homelessness.



Their Big Give programme works in partnership with Audacious Church, based in Trinity, social services, schools and local supermarkets to 'give big' to those that need it most.

Since launching two years ago, the charity has served 6,500 free lunches to children living in poverty, and at Easter a team of volunteers gave out more than 2,000 Easter eggs and organised huge community clean-ups in local areas.

Their other projects include supporting the homeless population through weekly drop-ins at the Audacious Church building. They also offer a free hot meal, haircuts, feet treatment, clothes, sleeping bags, toiletries and food parcels to roughsleepers.



Laura Howard from the Audacious Foundation

Friends of Green Grosvenor Park

A dedicated community group, which aims to improve the lives of people living in Lower Broughton.



Community campaigner Keri Muldoon is chair of the group and devoted to improving opportunities for local people, organising events and activities to raise funds for the park and improve the prospects of local people.

One such project is a children's drama club based at St Clements Church, which is regularly attended by up to 35 children every week.

Keri said: "This drama group has really helped the children to make friends, build confidence and explore their talents. I want to give them as many opportunities as possible, because if the kids aren't given the opportunities, how are they going to excel?"



Children's drama club in action at St Clements Church

There can only be one winner...



AND THE WINNER IS...

The Fountains

Dementia is a terminal illness that affects close to 1million people across the UK.

Someone is diagnosed with dementia every three minutes, and symptoms include memory loss, confusion and for some, forgetting their own loved ones.

The effects of the brain disorder can be devastating for the patients and their families, but the Fountains care home in Swinton is raising much-needed funds to help make life a little easier for its residents.

The facility, next to Victoria Park, is a 98-bed home that provides residential, nursing and dementia care.

From Zumba dance classes to singing sessions, the team of

dedicated staff run a busy activity schedule for residents, which aim to ease the effects of the condition, but they're raising money to create a new sensory room and purchase empathy dolls for their dementia patients and the £1,000 Springboard prize pot will help them on their way.

Shelley Hollorn, administrator at The Fountains, said: "We do as much as we can to provide activities for our patients, but our own fundraising can only go so far. This money from Springboard will help us to improve our care by helping to create a more stimulating environment for them."

Sensory rooms have a proven positive effect on people suffering with dementia, as they

allow them to safely explore all five senses by interacting with objects, lighting and textures, while empathy dolls have been found to bring real comfort to patients.

Shelley explained: "Dementia often causes people to feel isolated, frustrated, bored and unhappy as they start to lose understanding of the world around them.

"Doll therapy has been proven to really help those with dementia, particularly those in later stages as they provide comfort and familiarity. Families and carers often find that the dolls have given the person with dementia a renewed sense of purpose, as they have something to take care of."



Neighbourhood officer Drew presented the Springboard Heroes winnings to The Fountains.

Watch our video
on YouTube
of the moment The
Fountains were
told they were our
Springboard Heroes
winners.



“ THIS MONEY FROM
SPRINGBOARD WILL
HELP US TO IMPROVE
OUR CARE BY HELPING
TO CREATE A MORE
STIMULATING
ENVIRONMENT
FOR THEM ”

Shelley Hollorn

Close to

1,000
people voted

£84K

In **2018-19** we've invested
more than **£84,000** in
our Springboard fund

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Salix Homes hosted yet another successful Love Your Neighbourhood Week to encourage people to take pride in their communities.

The event was a huge success and involved an action packed week of activities across Salford. The line-up included hosting our first youth conference with our Boost4Youth Panel, community clean-ups, family fun days and a clampdown on fly-tipping.



Love Your Neighbourhood Week 2019 kicked off with our youth panel Boost4Youth hosting our very first Youth Conference to help raise awareness of some of the real issues that affect young people today.



Local young people discuss a range of topics at our Youth Conference.

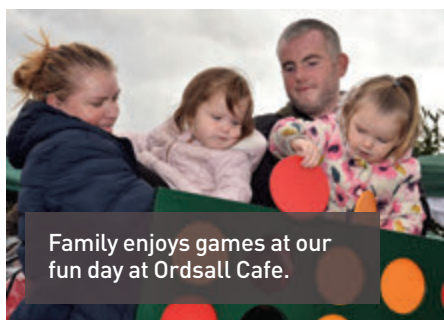


Our Environment Team helping at our family fun day at Ordsall Café.



The Youth Conference explored hard-hitting topics from knife crime to sexual exploitation and body image, but these are some of the real concerns facing young people today.

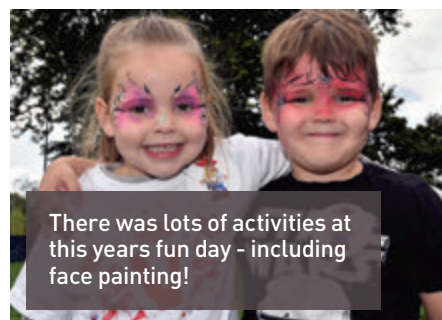
Love Your Neighbourhood



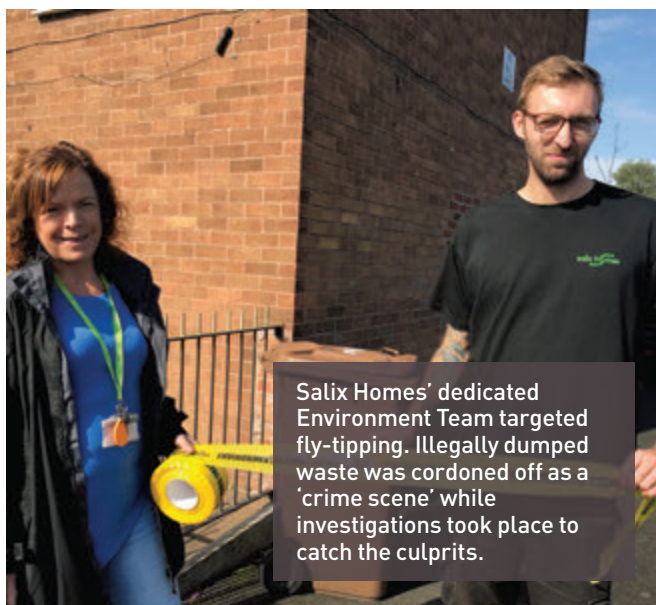
Family enjoys games at our fun day at Ordsall Cafe.



Our family fun day featured a petting zoo.



There was lots of activities at this years fun day - including face painting!



Salix Homes' dedicated Environment Team targeted fly-tipping. Illegally dumped waste was cordoned off as a 'crime scene' while investigations took place to catch the culprits.



Our Neighbourhood Team partnered with St James Church for a litter pick in Broughton.



Our Neighbourhood Team out on a clean-up day in Seedley with our new mini sweeper.

Neighbourhood



Nurses Abhik Jacob and his partner Pretty Mary Zachariah were among the first to move in, pictured here with Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett



Alexander Gardens today.

FROM DEVASTATION TO NEW BEGINNINGS

Boxing Day 2015 is a day the people of Salford will never forget. Torrential rain and flooding battered the region leaving a wake of devastation and 400 homes submerged in water. Among the homes affected was Alexander Gardens in Broughton. Now four years on from that fateful night, the former sheltered housing complex has been transformed.

Alexander Gardens is no ordinary housing development - it's the first scheme of its kind in the region to provide affordable homes for NHS workers.

With 26 modern apartments set in landscaped grounds, the facility has been life-changing for staff at our local hospital.

Salford Royal was experiencing a recruitment crisis with 200 vacancies it could not fill.

Hospital chiefs cited a lack of affordable accommodation in close proximity to the hospital as a major barrier in its ability to attract new doctors and nurses to the area.

Meanwhile Alexander Gardens on Gordon Street was stood empty. With the former residents all rehoused, a question mark remained over the future of the building. That was until we learned of the plight of our local hospital.

We teamed up with Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust to bring the empty shell of a building back to life and transform it into desperately needed homes for NHS staff.

People like nurse Abhik Jacob and his partner Pretty Mary Zachariah - also a nurse who were among the first to move in when the facility officially opened in December 2018.

The pair moved over from India and had been working at a London hospital before relocating to Salford.

Abhik said: "We wanted to relocate to this area as we have family nearby in Bolton. Finding somewhere affordable to live close to where you work is very difficult, so Alexander Gardens is perfect for us. It made the stress of relocating much easier and it's great that my

commute to the hospital only takes 15 minutes on the bus."

Salix Homes has spent more than £2million converting and renovating the building, partially funded thanks to a £780,000 grant from Homes England Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme.

Lee Sugden, chief executive at Salix Homes, said:

"This partnership with the NHS presented an opportunity for us to not only bring an empty building back in to use and create desperately needed homes, but also to help our local hospital attract much-needed key workers into Salford, which benefits the whole community."

“ ALEXANDER GARDENS HAS OPENED THE DOOR FOR HOW HEALTH AND HOUSING CAN WORK TOGETHER AND IN DOING SO, HAS TRANSFORMED A DERELICT EYESORE INTO AFFORDABLE HOUSING THAT WILL HAVE UNTOLD BENEFITS AND VALUE FOR THE PEOPLE OF SALFORD FOR MANY YEARS TO COME ”



Before



After

A kitchen at Alexander Gardens after it was devastated by the 2015 Boxing Day floods and a kitchen today.

BUILD SALFORD: BUILDING HOPE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Finding a job is difficult for many people, but for young people in Salford it can be even harder.

Salford has double the national average of 16 and 17-year-olds classed as not in employment, education or training (NEETs).

But Salix Homes has teamed up with organisations across the city to try and change the fortunes of young people and help them build themselves a bright future through the Build Salford initiative.

Build Salford is a traineeship programme which supports 16 to 24-year-olds into a career in construction.

Since its launch in 2017, it has helped 72 young people find training and jobs in the city's construction industry.

Over a course of 16 weeks, trainees gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed through classroom-based learning modules delivered by industry experts alongside on-site, practical hands-on training.

Of the latest cohort, eight of the trainees have gone on to secure an apprenticeship.

People like 17-year-old Richie Anderson, from Walkden, who is one of the Build Salford alumni of 2019.

After impressing on the programme, Richie is now completing his two-year plastering apprenticeship with our partner contractor Caseys and has been honing his trade at our ambitious refurbishment project at Fitzwarren Court in Pendleton.

Before being chosen from hundreds of other applicants for a coveted spot on the Build Salford programme, Richie was stacking shelves.


He explained: "At first I wanted to do tiling, but after trying out plastering, I started to really love it. During Build Salford, they get you to try out all the different skills and I found out I didn't have the patience for painting and decorating.

"I would recommend Build Salford to anyone interested in working in construction, as it points you in the right direction. I've enjoyed the training and the apprenticeship, as you work towards clear goals."

Salix Homes works alongside construction companies and social housing providers in the area to help deliver Build Salford, which is managed by Salford City College and supported by Salford Council.

Jackie Crook, skills and work manager at Salix Homes, runs employability training sessions as part of the programme, in partnership with the other housing providers and contractors, which includes workshops





Richie Anderson is one of the Build Salford success stories.

**“ I WOULD RECOMMEND
BUILD SALFORD TO
ANYONE INTERESTED
IN WORKING IN
CONSTRUCTION,
AS IT POINTS YOU IN THE
RIGHT DIRECTION ”**

Richie Anderson

on CV writing and job interview practice.

She said: “Build Salford is a huge success story for Salford, transforming the lives of young people, and proving just what can be achieved when partners work together.

“We are now approaching our fourth year and the majority of the trainees who’ve taken part in the programme have gone on to secure apprenticeships.

“The difference with Build Salford is we are supporting young people who perhaps would have struggled to secure an apprenticeship through the normal route. They may have left school or college with no qualifications, be drifting from job to job, or

lack the confidence to succeed in a job interview.

“The NEET figures in Salford are the highest in all the Greater Manchester boroughs, but thanks to Build Salford and other local initiatives, we’re successfully supporting these young people to get their lives and careers back on track, gain some experience and qualifications, and build themselves a bright future.”

Thanks to its success, Salford City College is hoping the Build Salford model could be replicated across other sectors, with discussions now underway about a Retail Salford and Salon Salford programme.

OUT AND ABOUT IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Broughton

Your Neighbourhood Team have been out in your area to build relationships and gain a better understanding of what really matters to you.

In 2018-19 we have carried out more than 150 events in Broughton ranging from surgeries to community events. This year we have awarded several community projects in Broughton funding and 22 members of the Broughton community are now signed up as our Community Connectors.

Want to find out about how we are tackling the issues that matter most to you? Visit www.salixhomes.org/neighbourhood-action-plans

Your Broughton neighbourhood in numbers: From April 2018/March 2019

105

properties were let in your area



100%

of people were satisfied with how we dealt with their ASB case



Cleared



of fly-tipping

Carried out

drop-in surgeries



in your neighbourhood

71% of residents



were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

Carried out

52

neighbourhood walkabouts



Supported

51

local people into work and training



12

legal actions

carried out to protect residents



Invested

£4,022,754

on improving homes





COMMUNITY SPRINGS INTO ACTION FOR CLEAN-UP

The streets of Broughton have undergone a major clean-up as part of our Love Your Neighbourhood Week of activities.

We teamed up with Rev Christine Threlfall and the volunteers at St James' Church for a community clean-up on the streets surrounding the church in Higher Broughton.

An army of volunteers rolled up their sleeves and cleared a mountain of rubbish, which contributed to a staggering two tonnes of waste being shifted from the streets of Salford throughout Love Your Neighbourhood Week.

Ben Cruickshanks, neighbourhood manager for Broughton, said: "We're passionate about building safe, clean and happy communities where our residents can be proud to live and work, so it was wonderful to see so many residents taking pride in where they live and joining us for the community clean-up."

Following the clean-up, the volunteers enjoyed a well-earned lunch at St James' Church Lunch Club, which you can read more about on pages 4 and 5.



Lee Sugden, chief executive at Salix Homes hands over cheque to Mark Whittington, manager of Salford Foodbank.

ON THE BREADLINE

Putting food on the table is a daily struggle faced by many families in Salford.

And it's a struggle known all too well by Mark Whittington, manager of Salford Foodbank, who witnesses people in crisis every day.

We spoke to Mark to find out just how desperate the situation in Salford really is.

Launched in 2012, Salford Foodbank provides emergency food parcels for thousands of people in desperate situations across the city.

In 2018, it gave out almost 5,000 food parcels, but worryingly demand for the service has seen a huge spike as the effects of welfare reforms and cut-backs to frontline services take hold.

Mark explains: "During 2019 we saw a 25% increase in people using the service and we are continuing to see people struggling for all sorts of reasons, particularly around benefit changes like Universal Credit.

"We are also seeing more working people and families struggling, people on zero hours contracts or low pay. It could sometimes be simply that an unexpected bill comes in and it puts people in a position where they can't afford to buy food."

Salford Foodbank operates four centres across the city at Mocha Parade in Lower Broughton, The Sanctuary, off South Langworthy Road, Connect Church in Eccles and at Swinton Salvation Army.

Supported by a team of 60 volunteers, people in crisis situations are referred to the foodbanks from one of 130 local referral agencies including Salix Homes.

People are given foodbank vouchers in exchange for a three-day emergency food parcel containing basic essentials including pasta, tinned goods and cereals. Sometimes, hygiene

products such as shampoo, shower gel and sanitary products are added to the packages, based on the person's needs.

Salix Homes has been proud to support Salford Foodbank over the years, with our staff regularly running food collections and during 2019 we raised £1,200 for the service.

Salix Homes is also proud to sponsor the Salford Foodbank van, which helps deliver and collect food items and donations across the area.

Mark added: "Our foodbank centres are open everyday of the week and we are completely reliant on donations from the public, so we're really grateful for the support of Salix Homes.

"We want to reach a future where our help isn't needed, but while there are people in Salford without enough money for food we want to ensure emergency support is available."

Lee Sugden, chief executive at Salix Homes, added: "Salford Foodbank is a lifeline for many individuals and families living in our communities, and here at Salix

Homes we have been proud to support it over the years.

"The foodbank is there to support people in their hour of need and we hope our continued support will go some way towards helping them carry on the essential work they do to help people living in poverty in Salford."

How to get help

If you need the support of Salford Foodbank, you must first obtain a food voucher which is available from one of 130 local referral agencies, including Salix Homes, local children's centres and Salford Council support services. Go to www.salfordfoodbank.org.uk for a full list.

How to donate

If you'd like to donate to Salford Foodbank, the following non-perishable food items are always required:

- Long-life milk and juice
- Tinned goods
- Biscuits
- Pasta and curry sauces
- Shampoo

Donation points are located in supermarkets across Salford including Sainsburys on Regent Road and Tesco in Pendleton.

For more information go to: www.salford.foodbank.org.uk



CENTENARIAN IRENE CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

In the year social housing marks its 100th anniversary, we spoke to one resident who's been there from the very start...

The year 2019 marks 100 years of the council house.

Following the end of the First World War, the then Prime Minister David Lloyd George pledged to build homes 'fit for heroes' - marking the start of the council housing system.

While there may have been public housing built in Britain prior to this, it was the Addison Act of July 1919 that really paved the way for large scale council house building, or social housing as it is today.

Just a few short weeks after Lloyd George's declaration, on 19 August 1919 Irene Butters was born, and has spent her whole life living in social housing.

The youngest of 10 children, Irene lived with her siblings and parents Mary-Anne and James Butters in a terraced house on Robert Hall Street in Ordsall.

Irene's father was a stevedore on Salford Docks, in charge of loading and unloading the ships coming in and out, and Irene has fond memories of a childhood growing up in Salford.

She said: "The people have always been my favourite thing about Salford and I remember there was a real sense of community - people used to leave their doors open and everyone would always help each other out."

When she was 18, Irene started work at British Home Stores in Manchester where she worked her way up to supervisor spending a 29-year career there.

During the 1970s, some of the properties on Robert Hall Street were demolished and Irene moved with her older sister May to a brand-new tower block in Ordsall - Sunnyside Court.

She said: "I've spent most of my life living in a tower block now. We were on a lower floor and when we first moved in I was a bit frightened thinking of all those flats on top of me, but you soon get used to it."

Irene got married when she turned 39, to the late Hugh Radcliffe.

After Sunnyside Court was demolished, Irene moved to a neighbouring tower block Nine



Irene, aged 20.

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Acre Court in 1990 where she plans to live out her years.

"I wouldn't want to live anywhere else," she said.

"I love living here, I know everyone, and my flat has a great view of the park. That park is my life - I watch the children playing and the football matches - why would I want to move at my time of life."

Irene is well-loved by the residents, along with her nephew Peter, at Nine Acre Court, who threw a special party to celebrate her 100th birthday - there was even a surprise visit from the Ceremonial



Irene with Mayor of Salford Charlie McIntyre and friend Barbara Harper.

“ I WOULDN'T WANT TO
LIVE ANYWHERE ELSE ”
Irene

Mayor of Salford Charlie McIntyre.

Her friend and fellow Nine Acre Court resident Barbara Harper said: "Irene's a real character and fiercely independent. Everyone here knows Irene and she'll often sit in the foyer chatting to people as they go past.

"We wanted to do something really special to celebrate her birthday as she's really special to us and she said she wanted to be Queen for the day."

And Irene, who still has a twinkle in her eye, has shared with us her secret to a long life.

"I've never smoked or gone out with boys, though I am on the look-out for a toy boy," she joked.

"I enjoy the odd Guinness or a gin and tonic. I've had a good life and I've always looked after myself and my appearance - and I think that's the secret."



"I TRULY BELIEVED THE WORLD WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT ME"

Every two hours, someone commits suicide in the UK.
A further one in four people will experience a mental health problem.

Mental health, depression and suicidal thoughts can affect anyone at anytime
and it's an issue that Salix Homes as an organisation takes very seriously.

In a bid to help break down the stigma surrounding mental illness,
our colleague Alex* has shared his moving story.

Alex* works at Salix Homes, but his name
has been changed to protect his identity.

Always laughing and joking, Alex doesn't fit the stereotype you'd expect for someone battling mental illness.

But beneath his smile and 'Salford-charm' hides a secret - the martial arts expert has been fighting the biggest battle of his life against his own demons.

Struggling with depression, the 28-year-old dad of two hit breaking point and was ready to end his life.

"I truly believed that the world would be better off without me," he said.

"It's hard to understand, but at the time even my children weren't enough to keep me here. I was just completely taken over by these demons.

"A lot of people say suicide is selfish, but I've started to realise now that it's the opposite. It's not that you don't care about other people, it's that you care so much you genuinely think they'd be better off if you weren't around."

Alex hid his depression from family, friends and colleagues.

"I was always laughing, always joking - no one had a clue what was going on," he said.

To the rest of the world Alex was just Alex - going to work, coming home, being a dad - nothing was any different, but behind this exterior he had meticulously planned his suicide ensuring his family were taken care of.

His turning point only came during what he had planned were his last few hours on this earth, when his girlfriend asked if he was ok.

"In the end, all it took was for my girlfriend to ask me 'are you alright?' and eventually I told her everything," he said.

"Just saying those words out loud it brought a huge sense of relief and I promised her I would get help."

After bravely confiding in his manager at Salix Homes, we helped Alex to access the counselling services available through our partnership with Salford University.

“ I WAS ALWAYS LAUGHING, ALWAYS JOKING - NO ONE HAD A CLUE WHAT WAS GOING ON ”

"Just talking about it has helped me massively, and nowadays I do find it so much easier to talk about", Alex explained.

"It's easy to say you should talk about it, but when you're in that position it's the last thing you want to do, but also the first thing you should do."

He added: "Looking back, it feels like I was a totally different person. Obviously, there's times when you remember that stuff, but it's about controlling it.

"It's like a fight, but you are fighting with yourself, and you have to know how to pick yourself back up. When I do get these dark thoughts now, I make time for myself, to clear my head."

What makes Alex's story all the more remarkable is while he was fighting his own battle with mental health, he saved the life of a woman threatening to jump off a bridge.

While driving through Pendleton, Alex spotted a woman sat on the motorway bridge and was compelled to stop and help.

After talking to her and keeping her calm he flagged down a passing ambulance, but refusing the help, she had gripped her legs to the underside of the barrier.

He recalls: "My main concern was I needed to get her back over the other side, but I knew the only way was to climb over the barrier, unhook her legs and scoop her up, so that's what I did.

"At the time I didn't even think about it, all that was going through my mind was I had to help her because I knew exactly what she was going through."

Safely on the other side, Alex offered her some kind words of advice.

"I just advised her to get help, and said I hope this gives you the wake-up call you need and to know that people do care, even strangers."

Alex was recognised for his heroic actions by Greater Manchester Police with a bravery award.

He added: "What happened on that bridge was a wake-up call for me too as I could almost see myself where she was. Only by chance was I there to help her in the darkest moment in her life, but she also helped me with the darkest moment in mine."

If you're suffering with mental health issues and want to access help, please contact the following organisations.

Samaritans

Call **116 123** or **Samaritans.org** - Provides confidential, non-judgemental, emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Saneline

Call **0300 304 7000** or **sane.org.uk** - A national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them.

Mind

mind.org.uk - Tips for everyday living to stay mentally healthy.

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk - Find out more about the counselling services offered within the NHS.

Mental Health

Mentalhealth.org.uk - Provides useful guides for how to look after your mental health.

TACKLING TENANCY FRAUD

Salix Homes is here to provide housing to people most in need, but people committing tenancy fraud are preventing us from providing a roof over the head of someone who genuinely needs it. With more than 6,000 applicants on the housing register in Salford - tackling tenancy fraud is a serious issue.

We are clamping down on tenancy fraud and we need your help.

It's estimated that tenancy fraud costs the public purse around £900 million every year, with 100,000 housing association homes across the country affected by some sort of tenancy fraud.

Anne-Marie Bancroft, our tenancy specialist, said: "Tenancy fraud can take many forms, from illegal subletting and not using it as your main home, to obtaining a property by deception.

"As a not-for-profit organisation, it is not right that some unscrupulous individuals are profiting from the

homes we let, and for every home that is being used fraudulently, means once less home available for people in genuine housing need.

"We take tenancy fraud extremely seriously and if we find a crime is being committed, we will not hesitate to take legal action."

Tenancy fraud is a criminal offence, punishable by up to two years in prison and a fine of up to £50,000.

Our tenants can play a key role in helping us catch out tenancy fraudsters, but do you know what tenancy fraud is and could you spot it?



Anne-Marie Bancroft,
our tenancy specialist.

WHAT IS TENANCY FRAUD?

Tenancy Fraud falls into three main categories, which are:

- 1 Obtaining a property by deception. People may have lied on their application or could already have a home elsewhere
- 2 Illegally subletting a property. Some people claim they're living in a property but are actually cashing in and renting it out to someone else
- 3 Purchasing a property through misuse of the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire scheme

HOW TO SPOT TENANCY FRAUD?

The public have a crucial role in helping us identify fraudsters in our neighbourhoods.

Maybe the tenant only visits the property occasionally, do different people move in and out regularly? Are there more people living there than you would expect for the size of the property?

Residents are our eyes and ears in the community, so if you spot anything suspicious report it on **0800 218 2000** or tenancyfraud@salixhomes.co.uk

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF TENANCY FRAUD?

As a landlord, it's crucial we know who is living in our properties and when homes are illegally sublet, we don't know they're there. We have a duty to keep our tenants safe, but we can't do that if we don't know they're living there.

It's also no secret that the country is experiencing a housing crisis with a huge shortfall in the supply of homes, but this is exacerbated by tenancy fraudsters who are using social housing to make a profit.

REPORT TENANCY FRAUD

If you suspect an incident of tenancy fraud call **0800 218 2000** or email tenancyfraud@salixhomes.co.uk

Case study one

A flat recovered from fraudsters is now being used as a safe haven for homeless people.

Our officers discovered that the one-bed flat in the Greengate area was being illegally sublet and was the subject of a fraudulent Right To Buy application, which had it been successful, would have meant the property was sold at a discount of more than £30,000 and been lost from the city's social housing supply.

After officers uncovered the fraudulent activity, the tenancy was terminated, and the property was reallocated to support the 'A Bed Every Night' project, which commits to providing a roof over the head of roughsleepers in Greater Manchester.

Case study two

Fraudsters illegally subletting one of our properties were brought to justice thanks to an eagle-eyed tradesman.

The carpet fitter's suspicions were roused by mattresses on the floor, which indicated several people were living in the property.

A swift investigation by our officers discovered the property was registered to a couple with young children; however a tenancy check found no trace of children living at the house.

The tenants had also lodged an application for Right to Buy to purchase the property, which was immediately denied.

Following our investigation, the tenancy was terminated and we have since been able to lease the home to a family in genuine need.

SPOT IT?

STOP IT.



THE CHANGING FACE OF CANON GREEN

Salford has undergone a massive transformation over the years. From a bustling industrial town with its famous docks, to today's booming city of skyscrapers and innovation, it's an area experiencing rapid change.

Salix Homes is investing heavily in our homes and communities, including a multi-million pound regeneration project at Canon Green Campus in Trinity, which will see the area transformed. But as we look towards a bright new future, it's important to recognise the past, so we've taken a trip down Memory Lane to celebrate the rich heritage of Canon Green Court.

With its distinctive blue balconies and brutalist architecture, Canon Green Court has been a prominent fixture on the Salford skyline for more than half a century.

Built in the 1960s, the high-rise block was named in honour of Canon Peter Green - a vicar at St Philip's Church and a Chaplain to The Queen.

Canon Green was a published writer, pacifist and was passionate about fighting social injustice.

He dedicated his life to supporting impoverished communities and is fondly remembered by those that knew him as "a real man of the people who loved the Salford people."

But delving further into the archives before Canon Green Court dominated the skyline, the site was once home to Blackfriars Road Baths.

Where the 140-year-old bath house once stood will soon be home to a brand new 11-storey apartment block, providing 108 much-needed affordable homes for local people.

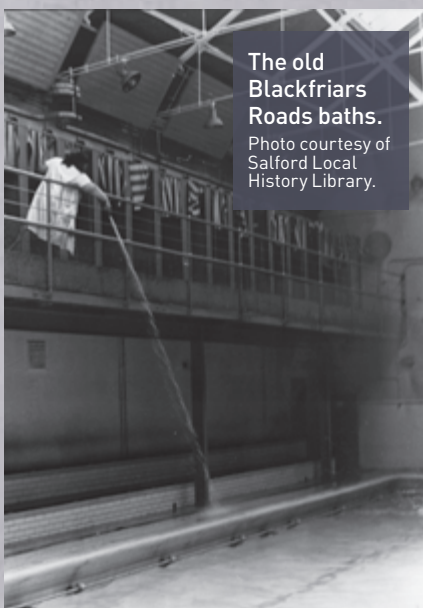
During the construction of the foundations, our contractors at Willmott Dixon uncovered remnants of the former public bath house including the old blue and white tiles.

Terry McBride, development manager at Salix Homes, said: "We knew the site was once home to the old public bath house and a full archaeology report was carried out prior to the development, so we did anticipate that there may be some remnants when we started to excavate the site.

“ THE SITE’S RICH HISTORY MEANS IT’S PLAYED A CENTRAL ROLE IN THE LIVES OF SALFORD PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS AND THE NEXT CHAPTER FOR THE SITE WILL DELIVER THE LARGEST AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME IN THE AREA ”

"The baths were built almost 140 years ago and demolished around 50 years ago, so it's been fascinating to discover a little piece of Salford history under our feet.

"The site's rich history means it's played a central role in the lives of Salford people over the years and the next chapter for the site will deliver the largest affordable housing scheme in the area, so



The old Blackfriars Roads baths.
Photo courtesy of Salford Local History Library.

we're proud to be building the homes that Salford desperately needs."

Blackfriars Baths was opened on Blackfriars Road in 1880 and comprised of two swimming pools, 33 slipper baths and one vapour bath.

According to historic records, the cost of the site was £2,310 and construction cost £9,600.

During the 1870s, public bathing became nationally recognised as an integral part of public health and the council of the time appointed a Baths Committee to build public bath houses across Salford, which also included baths opening in Pendleton, Broughton, Seedley and on Regent Road.

During the 1930s proposals were discussed to demolish Blackfriars Baths and build a much larger facility in the city, but plans ground



An artists' impression of how the Canon Green Campus development will look.

to a halt due to the outbreak of the Second World War.

The baths were eventually demolished during the 1970s and the site, which sits within the grounds of Canon Green Court, has remained disused ever since.

As part of the £22.5m Canon Green Campus development, we are completely transforming and modernising ageing tower block Canon Green Court, which includes new kitchens, bathrooms,

heating systems, sprinkler systems and exterior re-facing and insulation.

Neighbouring apartment block Westminster House is also due to undergo an external facelift.

The development, which has been partially funded thanks to a £3.8million grant from Homes England for the new block, is expected to be completed in spring 2021.



The old Blackfriars Roads baths.

Photo courtesy of Salford Local History Library

Watch Canon Green grow



Keep track of this landmark development with weekly pictures on our Facebook page





LEADING THE WAY ON BUILDING SAFETY

Salix Homes is among the first housing associations in the country to sign a new national Building Safety Charter, which sets out to raise the bar of building safety following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

We're part of a group of 'Early Adopters' who are working closely with the Government to trial new ways of working that aim to improve safety in the construction and social housing sectors.

Sue Sutton, our executive director of operations, explains: "This industry has a collective responsibility to safeguard the people living in our buildings and ensure they are safe places to live both now and in the future.

"The Building Safety Charter is helping pave the way for real change, and we are very pleased to be among the first to sign it, demonstrating our continued commitment to putting safety first."

Salix Homes was one of just three housing associations in the

country and the only one outside of London to sign-up to the charter and meet with Housing Minister at the time, Kit Malthouse MP.

Mr Malthouse said: "We established the Early Adopters Group as part of sweeping reforms to make sure the building industry prioritises residents' safety and creates a real culture change as we look to rebuild this sector.

"This group has become integral in helping prepare the industry for our future reforms and this Charter is an important step in making sure that the safety of residents is considered the highest priority at all stages of the building process."

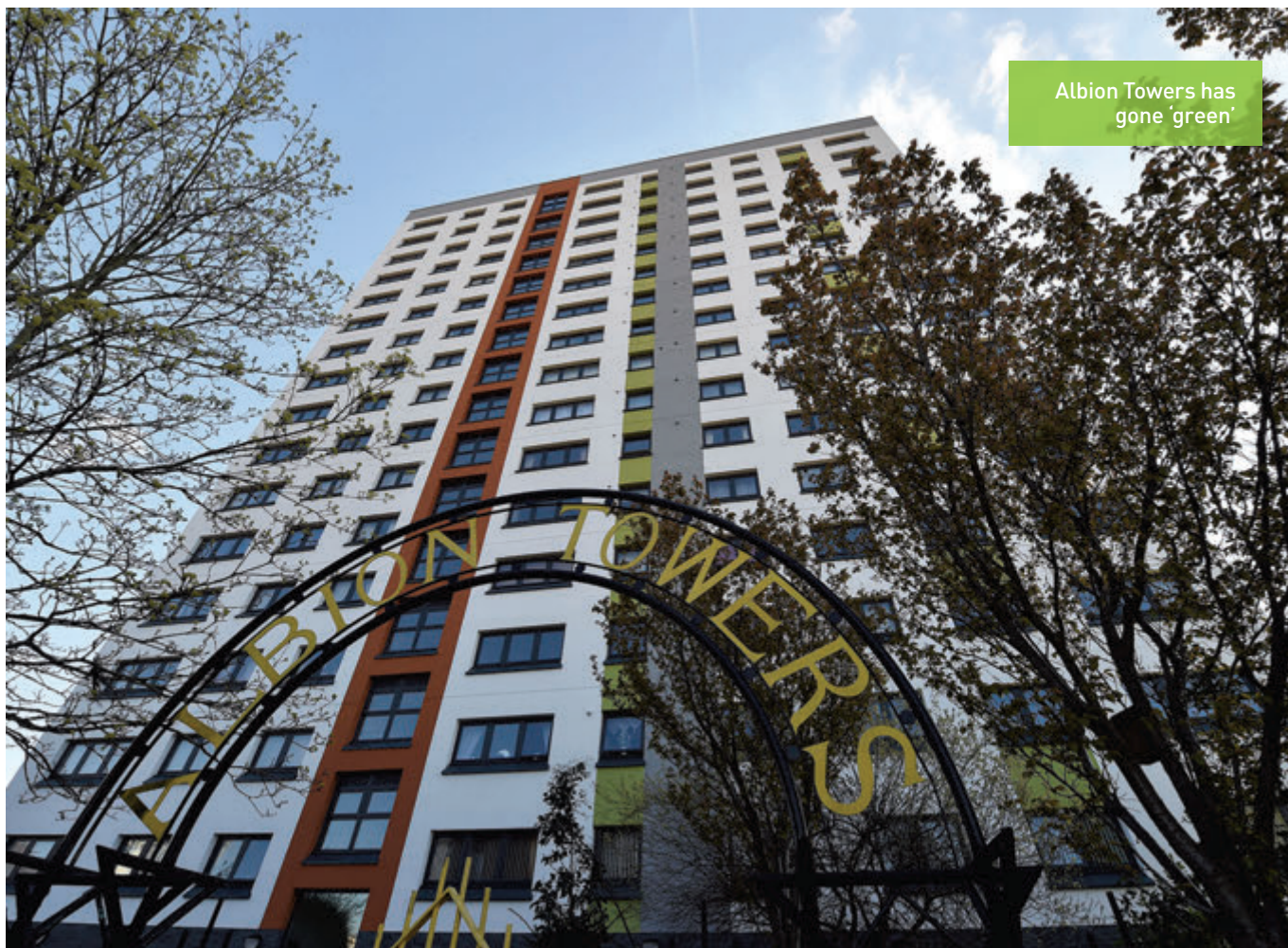
Salix Homes owns 18 tower blocks across Salford, eight of which were found to have cladding systems that did not meet the Government's test criteria.

All affected blocks were only partially cladded in aluminium composite material (ACM) and these cladding systems have now been removed from all eight blocks, which are Mulberry, Magnolia and Sycamore Courts, Riverbank and

Newbank Towers, Blackfriar Court and Arthur Millwood and Canon Hussey Courts.

Sue added: "Following on from the Grenfell Tower tragedy, Salix Homes has implemented and embedded a new standard of building safety. We will continue to develop and raise our standards, working closely with the fire service, the Government, safety experts, and of course our residents, to ensure all our buildings continue to be safe places to live, both now and in the future."

“ THIS CHARTER IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN MAKING SURE THAT THE SAFETY OF RESIDENTS IS CONSIDERED THE HIGHEST PRIORITY AT ALL STAGES OF THE BUILDING PROCESS ”



TOWERS TURN 'GREEN'

Going green is high on the agenda for Salix Homes with many of our tower blocks undergoing an eco-makeover.

Albion Towers in Pendleton is among the first to benefit from the green treatment as part of a multi-million-pound refurbishment scheme at the 17-storey block, which has seen the building completely transformed.

We have invested in a state-of-the-art geo-thermal heating system, which has improved the thermal heating efficiency of the building and is reducing residents' heating bills.

The old gas supply was completely removed from the block, and the new eco-friendly system has been installed under the carpark.

The system works by harnessing the natural heat from underground by pumping water through it in pipes. The heat pump then increases the temperature, and the heat is used to provide heating or hot water to the homes.

The heating system uses ambient heat from the ground, rather than burning fuel to generate heat.

Lee Sugden, chief executive at Salix Homes, said: "Never has it been more important to consider our carbon footprint and the effect our actions have on the planet. Everyone has a role to play, so we are proud to be doing our bit as a

landlord to make our homes more eco-friendly, while at the same time tackling fuel poverty by reducing residents' heating bills."

Fitzwarren Court is also undergoing a multi-million-pound modernisation programme, due for completion in summer 2020, which includes the new ground source heating system, along with new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors, external rendering, the upgrading of communal areas and fire safety enhancements including a sprinkler system and fire alarms.

MILESTONE MOMENTS 2018-2019

This past year has been a monumental one for Salix Homes, we are continuing to help our communities live, grow and thrive together and here are just some of this year's milestone moments...

AUTUMN



» Alexander Gardens in Broughton was Highly Commended in the Affordable Housing Scheme of the Year category in the prestigious 24 Housing Awards.

» We launched our campaign to clamp down on fraudsters as part of Fraud Awareness Week.

» We supported Together with Tenants, a campaign by the National Housing Federation to give housing association tenants a stronger voice. The NHF have launched Together with Tenants to promote better relationships between landlords and tenants.



WINTER

» Our MiiHome project which helps keep older tenants safe in their homes was shortlisted in the Innovative Landlord of the Year category in the UK Housing Awards.



» We featured in a new BBC One daytime series shining a spotlight on Britain's empty homes crisis

» Our Neighbourhood Teams carried out our annual home visits and delivered winter welfare packs as part of our annual Keep Warm, Keep Well scheme.





- » Work started to transform a derelict former women's hostel in Salford into much-needed social housing, called Joan Lestor house, which is now complete.

SUMMER



- » Salix Living scooped a prestigious award in recognition of its efforts to help tackle the housing crisis. Our private sector leasing arm and ethical lettings agency took the top prize in the Excellence in Improving Private Rented Sector Standards in the Northern Housing Awards.

- » We were named amongst the top 50 landlords in the UK for a second year running in the prestigious 24 Housing Top 50 Landlords 2019 roll of honour.



- » The heroic actions of our very own tenancy support officer Keeley Jeng were featured on prime-time BBC series - Ambulance.



SPRING

- » We helped set the scene for much-loved Manchester soap - Coronation Street.

Springbank, our sheltered housing scheme in Seedley and the Beechfarm area in Swinton, was used for filming.



- » As part of Greater Manchester Housing Providers (GMHP) we backed ambitious plans for the future including the delivery of new homes, investing in solutions for an ageing population, tackling homelessness and creating new apprenticeships.

- » We pledged our support for another Great British Spring Clean in a bid to clean-up Salford.

- » We were shortlisted in four categories in the Northern Housing Awards, which recognise the achievements of housing providers in the north.



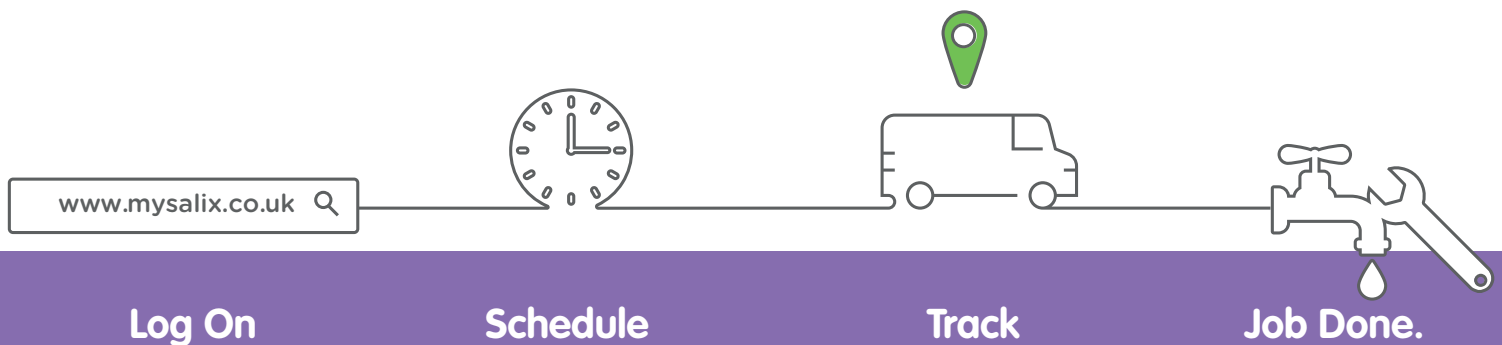
Find out about the difference we make in supporting our communities to live, grow and thrive together with our 2018-19 social impact report: www.salixhomes.org/socialvalue



Watch our year come to life in our 2018-19 annual review: www.salixhomes.org/2018-19

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