



# WILLOW TREE

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

# NEWSLETTER

## SPRING 2023



■ WTHP Limited merger ■ Tenant Consultation Road Shows ■ Resident Involvement  
■ Developments - coming soon ■ Board, Exec Team and Staff ■ Opening hours & contact details

## CHAIR OF BOARD - WTHP LIMITED MERGER

I write this foreword as two small housing associations that have worked closely together for the last two years, have finally merged to become Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited. I am delighted to have been part of the team that has worked tirelessly to achieve the goal that we set ourselves in 2020 to merge by 2023.

We began as like minded organisations looking to harness our collective expertise, knowledge and passion for social housing, in order to benefit all of our existing and future tenants. Our merger means that we have been able to increase our ability to provide new homes that will be fit for purpose to tackle the earth's climate challenges. We are in a better position to invest properly in our existing homes so that people can live in safe and secure spaces. We have ensured that we build a staff team that can develop themselves and provide succession into the future.

The Board and I do not underestimate the scale of the challenges that society continues to face. We provide services and homes to people who have limited choice, and who cannot access the general housing market for a wide variety of reasons. It is vitally important to us that we listen to our tenants, to understand their concerns and needs, and to ensure we deliver a service that is one to be envied.

We are committed to remaining a community based organisation, that can respond and adapt swiftly to our tenants as and when required. We will continue to work with the Regulator and other stakeholders to demonstrate our commitment to good governance and to receive assurance that the work we say we do is evidenced. We will work with our Residents' Panel, which will be newly established, to gain insight into tenants lived experience in our properties. We will gather data wherever possible on satisfaction levels with our service and act on any recommendations or areas for improvement that are identified, and we will publicise these to show our progress.

Most importantly for the Board, we will discharge our duty to ensure that Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited remains financially strong and focused on the right objectives, that meet our current and future tenants needs. We will test our plans to ensure we can withstand pressures, both operationally and economically. Where we have to make critical decisions, we will do so in the knowledge that they are the right ones to make, and are consistent with our vision and mission to deliver more, and to build and manage safe and comfortable homes that are truly affordable for people who are not in a position to access the housing market.



**TIM SHOBROOK**  
Chair

**“We are committed to remaining a community based organisation, that can respond and adapt swiftly to our tenants as and when required.”**

## CEO - WTHP LIMITED MERGER

Welcome to this first edition of the Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited newsletter. It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to our new merged organisation, that looks forward to building on excellent work already undertaken across our business in the last three years.

As Willow Tree moves forward, our focus is clear, to deliver more and for the benefit of the people that we provide services to both now and in the future.

To that end we are currently working on the corporate strategy that will inform our priorities for the next three years. They will be centred around four key areas:

**People** – this includes our current and future tenants, our colleagues, and all of the partners we work with in collaboration as a smaller enterprise across the South West.

**Property** – we will work to ensure we maintain and invest in the homes we own and manage, keeping them safe, and also working to improve their fabric to deliver more sustainable homes for the future.

**Place** – we want people to enjoy where they live and for the new homes we build to be where people can access services and benefit from green spaces as much as possible.

**Environment** – we aim to be an organisation that puts sustainability at the heart of what we do, whether that is in the building of new homes, retrofitting existing ones, or limiting our impact on the biodiversity that is so important in supporting the efforts being made to manage climate change.

Whilst we cannot underestimate the issues we face in relation to rising costs of living, increased costs of materials and labour, and an uncertain interest rate environment, both I and all the team at Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited are excited about our prospects for the future.

We will look to build better relationships with our tenants, listening to what matters to them and acting upon improvements that we can make to deliver better services. We will be honest when difficult decisions need to be made and how we prioritise them. We will support our colleagues to undergo training and development that builds upon their professional knowledge, that will enhance our ability to deliver.

What is clear is that housing associations are needed now more than ever, to support those who would not otherwise be able to secure a safe home. This means that we have a responsibility to be open in our approach, demonstrate integrity in the way in which we work, and accept when we need to improve.

I am certain that the future will see Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited growing from strength to strength and I look forward to working together to achieve the delivery of homes and services that have wellbeing of all at the core.



**DONNA JOHNSON**  
CEO



## TENANT CONSULTATION ROADSHOWS

We understand the importance of listening to our tenants and taking onboard what they have to tell us. This is never more important than when undertaking such a fundamental project, as the merging of two organisations. To this end, we wanted to ensure that our tenants were given an opportunity to have their say at one of our Merger Consultation Roadshows.

To spread the word of our intended merger far and wide, we held a number of Roadshows in November 2022 around the South West region; we travelled from Yate in Gloucestershire to Plymouth in Devon and many places in between. Each Roadshow was held in an accessible location and hosted by a selection of staff members, who were on hand to answer any questions and provide refreshments.

It was wonderful to meet so many of our tenants and to build relationships with them; many of whom had taken the time to attend in some very adverse weather conditions. Almost all who attended were very positive about the merger, and those who did have concerns were able to get their queries answered directly by our staff. Overall the Roadshows were a great success.



One of our tenants accompanied by our staff at a Roadshow Event at Ridge Junior School, Yate



A Roadshow Event at Stafford Court, Totnes



A Roadshow Event at West India House, Bridgwater

## RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

In order to provide services that meet the needs of our residents, Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited is committed to improving how we gather and take their views into account. Central to this will be the creation of a new Residents' Panel.

Over Autumn last year, three meetings involving seven interested residents took place, to discuss what a Panel would do and how it would work. These co-operative meetings were very useful and as a result of these; in December 2022 it was agreed what work the Panel would undertake, the support it would require and detailed how residents could join the Panel. In addition to this, a selection of residents and staff attended a Resident Engagement Conference in Mid-October 2022 which was put on by the National Housing Federation. Valuable information and tips acquired at this event fed into the meetings throughout the Autumn, and there are future plans that resident attendance at the conference hosted by the National Housing Federation will continue on an annual basis.

All residents received a leaflet in March this year inviting them to apply to be part of the Panel. Panel members will be in place by the end of March 2023, it is anticipated that the first meeting will take place during April 2023. Details of the panel members and useful information such as what the Panel has achieved to date, will be available on our new website – [www.willowtreehousing.org.uk](http://www.willowtreehousing.org.uk)

We will also be taking forward our online feedback group in April, with a short online survey being sent out to residents to get their views on WTHP and issues that affect them and their home.

If you would like to discuss anything concerning this survey please email - [customerservices@willowtreehousing.org.uk](mailto:customerservices@willowtreehousing.org.uk)





## DEVELOPMENTS COMING SOON

### The Meadows, Crapstone

We are delighted to be working with Classic Builders and West Devon Borough Council on this rural development on the edge of Dartmoor National Park, Devon. The scheme includes 8 new affordable properties, including 6 affordable rent and 2 shared ownership homes. Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited (WTHP) is utilising the fabric first approach to create these high standard homes, ensuring they are affordable to rent as well as run and will include electric vehicle charging points. Construction is nearing completion and we are hopeful that residents will be in their new homes before the summer.



Construction at Crapstone

### Batts Meadow, North Petherton

Following the success of our units at Stoke St Gregory, we are excited to be working with Otter Construct again, this time to deliver 7 new affordable homes at Batts Meadow in North Petherton. Work has already begun on site and these properties are going to include a range of eco-friendly features, including electric vehicle charging points, solar panels and air source heat pumps. The houses are being built to nationally described space standards (NDSS) to ensure they are good sized family homes. Completion is scheduled for Winter 2023.



Construction at Crapstone

The properties comprise two x 2 bedroom shared ownership houses, four x 2 bedroom affordable rent houses and one x 3 bedroom affordable rent house. Anyone who is interested in one of these homes should register their interest with WTHP on Telephone Number - 01934 750780 and with Homefinder Somerset at - [www.homefindersomerset.co.uk](http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk)

### North Newton

We are also pleased to be working with a local developer, Gadd Properties, to deliver two new 3 bedroom houses in North Newton. This small site only has 6 units in total and is being built on a former farmyard. These affordable rent properties are being built to NDSS so will provide good sized family homes and will have air source heat pumps. We are anticipating these homes will also be completed in Winter 2023.

Anyone who is interested in one of these properties should register their interest with WTHP on 01934 750780 and with Homefinder Somerset at [www.homefindersomerset.co.uk](http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk)

### Future Schemes

We are planning to enter into a new contract for another site just outside of Taunton, which will include 1 shared ownership and 4 affordable rent properties. Working with a local developer who we have worked with before, these homes will include air source heat pumps, solar panels and battery storage, as well as electric car charging points. Work is expected to start on site in Summer 2023, with an estimated completion of Summer 2024.

## BOARD MEMBERS



**TIM SHOBBROOK**  
Chair



**CRAIG SULLIVAN**  
Vice Chair



**MICHELLE SMITH**  
Chair of Remuneration & Nominations Committee



**WENDY LEWIS**  
Chair of Development Committee



**SIMON HASKELL**  
Chair of Audit & Risk Committee



**STEPHEN BURTCHAELL**  
Board Member



**STEVE HAYES**  
Board Member



**SUE LANE**  
Board Member



**BRIAN WHITTAKER**  
Board Member

## EXEC TEAM



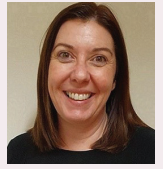
**DONNA JOHNSON**  
CEO



**CATHERINE DAVIES-GALLAGHER**  
Finance Director



**SUE SPARKS**  
Head of Corporate Services

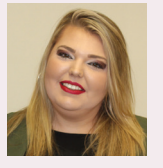


**HEATHER RIGG**  
Operations Director

## THE TEAM



**AIDAN TRUELOVE-SPIERS**  
Asset Project Surveyor



**ALEX SMITH**  
Housing Officer



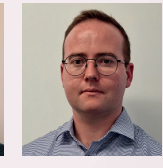
**AMANDA WEBB**  
Housing Officer



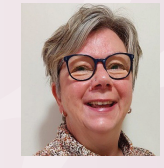
**ANGELA DERRY**  
Shared Ownership & Rentplus Officer



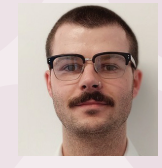
**BRIAN CONDRON**  
Maintenance Officer



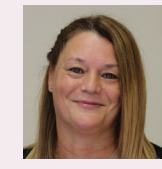
**CADHLA GERAGHTY**  
Finance Manager



**CLARE NORTON**  
Business Support Administrator



**CONOR MAHER**  
Business Support Administrator



**DAWN KIRBY**  
Maintenance Officer



**DEBBIE JOHNSON**  
Housing Officer



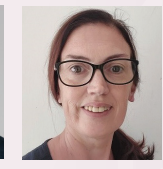
**EMMA BENNEY**  
Housing Officer



**HELEN TAMPLIN**  
Development Assistant



**JANE EAGLING**  
Corporate Services Assistant



**JANEY MATTHEWS**  
Trainee Income & Expenditure Officer



**JEMMA BAILEY**  
Corporate Services Assistant



**KAREN WALKER**  
Development Project Manager



**KERRY WOOD**  
Rent & Income Management Officer



**LIZ FARMER**  
Corporate Services Manager



**MARK GOODEY**  
Operations Manager



**MARK JOHNSON**  
Business Support Administrator



**MOLLY RICHARDS**  
Income & Expenditure Officer



**NEIL BUCKLAND**  
Asset Manager



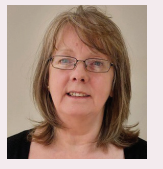
**PAUL RAEBURN**  
Operations Manager



**RIA GILLINGS**  
Development Project Officer



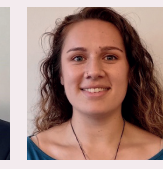
**ROXANNE SWEETING**  
Senior Business Support Administrator



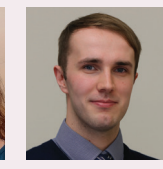
**SANDRA HODGES**  
Business Support Administrator



**SARAH PURDY**  
Trainee Housing Officer



**SONJA LEWIS**  
Financial Analyst



**WILL LLOYD-JONES**  
Finance Manager



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## Why not join in on social media, give our pages a like?

We are active on Facebook and Twitter with updates on the work we do and regular posts with hints and tips on resident safety #maintenancemonday, #wellbeingwednesday and #safetysaturday

Is there something you'd like to see, let us know!

[www.willowtreehousing.org.uk](http://www.willowtreehousing.org.uk)



Willow Tree Housing Partnership



@willowThousing

## DELIVER AND GROW

### OPENING TIMES OVER THE EASTER PERIOD

Friday 7th April	CLOSED
Saturday 8th April	CLOSED
Sunday 9th April	CLOSED
Monday 10th April	CLOSED
<b>Tuesday 11th April - normal office hours resume 9am - 5pm</b>	

### Somerset Office

Eastbridge House  
Pill Road  
Rooksbridge  
Somerset  
BS26 2TN

Telephone (01934) 750780

### Devon Office

Studio 5 - 11  
Millbay Road  
Plymouth  
Devon  
PL1 3LF

Telephone (01752) 250902

## IF YOU HAVE A MAINTENANCE EMERGENCY WHILE THE OFFICE IS CLOSED, PLEASE USE THE OUT OF HOURS TELEPHONE NUMBERS BELOW.

Please remember, if your call is deemed not to be an emergency you may be charged for any callout that you request.

If your property is less than a year old & you have an emergency or urgent repair, please refer to your Home User Guide for contact information for the developer.

**Gas emergency heating or gas hot water repairs for all tenants please call Gregor Heating on telephone number - 01179 352 400**

**All other emergency repairs, including electric heating and electric hot water repairs or Health & Safety issues:-**

For Cornwall, Plymouth, West Devon, South Hams, Torridge & Teignbridge tenants please call **MSB Property Services** on telephone number - **07415 770 771**

Tenants in all other areas please call **MD Property Group** on telephone number - **01278 574 355**

*\* Please be advised that calls to the office may be recorded for training and monitoring purposes*