

Residents' Forum update from the Chair

Residents' Forum update from Jon Cuming-Higgs, Newlon resident and Chair of the Residents' Forum.

The Residents' Forum met on Wednesday, 5th November, with a strong turnout of Forum members, the Chief Executive, and Directors from across the organisation.

Here are the key headlines from our discussion.



**Jon Cuming-Higgs, Chair
and Newlon Resident**

This was my first time chairing the Residents' Forum, which felt rather daunting. However, the Forum members were very dedicated and well-informed, and I managed to get through the meeting with only a couple of hiccups.

Performance and satisfaction

We reviewed the latest data, which showed a positive trend. While the latest national data indicates a rise of just 0.5% in overall tenant satisfaction, Newlon's has risen by 3%. However, we also discussed a recent dip in satisfaction regarding complaints handling. This was linked to capacity issues with a new contractor, which led to a rise in complaints in September. The Forum was assured that Newlon is holding weekly operational meetings to address this and get performance back on track.

Repairs

We received an update on the new repair contractors, who started in July. Both contractors have launched a live tracking feature. This 'Uber-style' system allows you to see when an operative is on their way and track their route in real time, aiming to offer transparency and reduce missed appointments.

Awaab's Law

The Forum discussed the new protocols Newlon introduced on 27th October. Awaab's Law is named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old boy who died in 2020 from a respiratory condition caused by prolonged exposure to mould in his family's home. There is a new triage system ensuring emergency hazards are flagged immediately. There are also new dedicated 'Complex Repairs Officers.' These officers will manage high-impact repairs, focusing specifically on damp, mould, and structural issues. One of the Forum members volunteered to test the system and report back.

If you need to report damp or mould, please contact Newlon's Service Centre by calling **020 7613 8080**. You can also report via the My Newlon portal.

Financial inclusion

The Financial Inclusion team has been successfully helping residents experiencing financial hardship. In 2024/25, the team ensured that 29 tenancies were successfully sustained with their support, and there have been no evictions since 2024. Forum members talked about how helpful the support from the team was. I would recommend anyone who may be struggling financially to contact them sooner rather than later. They have a lot of experience helping people, and the sooner they can start helping, the better for everybody. They are dedicated to preventing people from losing their tenancies in times of crisis.

A brief history of Newlon

On a lighter note, the Forum received a potted history of Newlon, from its roots with two homes to becoming a provider in nine boroughs, offering just over 8,500 affordable homes. These homes cover a diverse range of housing—from street properties, some over 100 years old, to new-build blocks of flats—and different types of tenure, including rented and Shared Ownership. In partnership with Outward, Newlon Group's specialist care and support charity, Newlon provides homes for around 40,000 people.

Walkabouts

Forum members were invited to join the executive team on their monthly walkabouts. Each month, the Chief Executive, senior managers, and directors visit different schemes to meet residents and review the standards Newlon is maintaining regarding properties and the surrounding neighbourhood areas Newlon is responsible for. Reflecting on Newlon providing 8,500 affordable homes—that's a lot of walking about!