# **Residents' Forum update from Jon Cuming-Higgs.**

## Jon is Chair of the Residents' Forum and a Newlon resident



At the May Residents' Forum meeting, members came together with staff for an open and honest conversation about the things that matter most to residents, particularly repairs, the condition of homes, value for money, complaints and overall satisfaction.

Repairs were a major focus. Members talked through the current situation and the challenges linked to one of our contractors who is not meeting the expected standards. Residents shared real experiences of delays, missed appointments and the day-to-day frustration this can cause. While there have been some improvements, especially around better communication and progress in reducing outstanding jobs, it's clear that performance in some areas is still not where it needs to be.

Importantly, the discussion didn't stop at the problems. There was a strong focus on what's being done about it. Members heard that performance is now being more closely monitored, with stronger oversight and clearer accountability. Work is being redirected where needed to make sure repairs are completed, and contingency plans are in place to keep services running. There are also options on the table for further action if the contractor does not improve, alongside work to strengthen how contractors are selected in the future. The Forum welcomed this honest approach and the focus on learning lessons to prevent similar issues happening again.

The condition of homes was another key part of the conversation. Members discussed how investment is being made to maintain and improve properties, and how resident feedback has helped shape these plans. There was recognition that improving homes, especially where there are backlogs, takes time and continued investment. Members were encouraged by the ambition not just to meet basic standards, but to improve the overall quality of residents' homes and neighbourhoods.

Value for money also came up. Members were keen to understand how money is being spent and what difference it makes. There was a clear feeling that residents want more transparency, particularly around repairs and major works, so they can see how decisions are made and what outcomes are being delivered. This will be reflected more clearly in future communications, including the Residents' Annual Report.

Complaints were seen as an important way of understanding where things aren't working well. Members agreed that complaints should be used as a learning tool, helping to highlight issues and drive improvements. Better communication, quicker responses, and a more consistent approach were all highlighted as areas residents want to see improve.

Finally, the Forum looked at overall satisfaction. While results are improving and compare well with other landlords, members were clear that repairs continue to have a big impact on how residents feel about services. Getting this right will be key to maintaining trust and confidence.