

# UNDER ONE ROOF



## EXCELLENCE TRAIL

**Over 60 tenants came to the Nehemiah Tenants' Conference 2026 - 146% more than last year - and gave their valued contribution to a meaningful and enjoyable event.**

Held in West Bromwich in March, the conference was themed on 'delivering excellence together'. Toni Punter, a national manager at tenant engagement experts, Tpas, hosted the interactive discussion.

"Delivering excellence is about a culture where tenants' voices shape decisions. Bringing your lived experience, challenging respectfully, and being involved. It's a partnership with you. Let's do it together."

She went on to explain, "Excellence is not about being perfect. It's about listening, learning, and improving. Excellence leaves a trail - you see the difference."

Ideas and information flowed between tenants and staff, including our chief executive Llewellyn Graham who spoke about Nehemiah's values and work priorities.

Partner organisations explained their support and were on hand to chat, including Frontier Repairs, Age UK, Birmingham Settlement, and Better Housing Better Health. Sign language interpreters translated the event as it happened.

The conference received a positive thumbs up from those attending, with 71% giving it the highest score rating. After the serious talk, everyone enjoyed a prized raffle and shared company over a good lunch.



## INTO ACTION

**Your feedback from the tenants' conference is being used to drive actions and changes.**

Specific repair issues were followed up and fixed, such as through site visits with tenants. Comments about the conference room will help us plan for similar future events.

The action plan lists tasks, who's responsible and the timescale. Actions include meeting with a group of tenants to discuss value-for-money queries about their communal cleaning service and the service charge they pay.

It also includes looking into how we can work with partner organisations to provide a handyman service to Nehemiah tenants.

# HELLO ANNA

Welcome to Anna who joins us as property services administrator. Anna deals with repairs admin and is the first point of contact for our contractors.

It's her first time working for a housing association but as a young adult she lived in social housing. "So it's interesting to see it from the other side."

She is just a few weeks into the role: "Today I've been uploading records of our gas safety inspections," she explains. "I'm also organising home surveys for energy performance certificates (EPCs). It's been great to talk to tenants about appointments."

Anna previously worked for a council and NHS joint service providing people with medical aids at home, from crutches to bed hoists.

"I like being part of something that provides for the local community - even if it's behind the scenes doing the paperwork!" says Anna. "I'm enjoying getting to know people here. It's been a positive experience to see how much Nehemiah cares for its tenants."



# KITCHEN JOY



**They say life is lived well in the kitchen - including at the best parties! Yet you can't live well without a kitchen.**

Luckily the inconvenience of being without one for a short time during its renovation was worth it, say tenants Malcolm and his wife Debbie.

They had a new kitchen fitted as part of an improvement programme for 22 homes at Woodside House in Shard End, Birmingham. The couple chose from a range of colour finishes for their cabinets, worktop, flooring and tiles.

"We're thrilled with it," says Malcolm. "It feels like a show home kitchen to us! The design actually makes the space look bigger."

The finished result is especially satisfying, as there was an unexpected hitch along the way in the fitting of this particular kitchen.

"Some of the workmanship, such as the tiling, was below the high standard expected by us and our customers," says Stephanie Franks, director at Frontier which carried out the work. "As soon as we knew, we quickly put things right."

Malcolm agrees. "It was sorted out brilliantly by Nehemiah and its contractor. We're very happy, and love using our new kitchen."

# ENERGY BOOST

**Help us to help you! Your home should feel warm and cosy. If it doesn't, then it might be due an upgrade, like new storage heaters or extra loft insulation.**

Visits to check on your property's energy performance certificate (EPC) rating give us information we need to plan and budget for improvements.

Please give us access to your home for these important checks so we can maintain your home's quality. We write to you first and then you'll receive a letter from our surveyor about making an appointment.

It's all part of our effort to help the nation cut carbon emissions, reduce energy bills and tackle fuel poverty.



# POWER UP

**Would you know what to do in a power cut?**

You can receive extra advice and support if you're on a special list called the Priority Services Register (PSR) for electricity, gas and water.

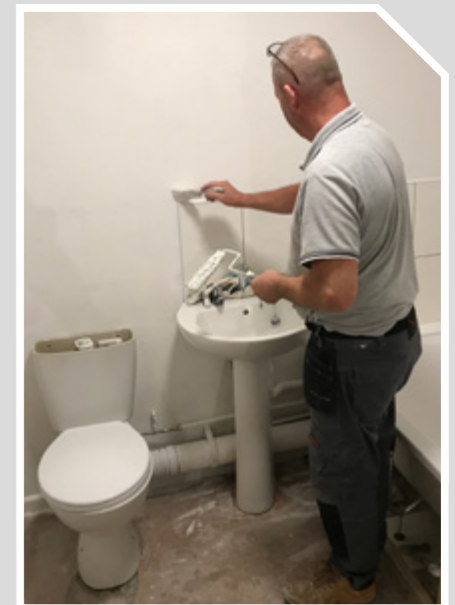
Benefits include being the first in a power cut to get information, plus emergency power for needs such as medical equipment or heating.

This is a free service if you are of pensionable age, live with a child under 5, have a disability, or are in temporary need, such as recovering after an operation.

"Registration for PSR is with your network operator, which is responsible for pipes and wires, rather than the energy provider you pay your bills to," explains Rory Burke, partnership manager at the charity Better Housing Better Health.

Rory attended our recent Nehemiah's tenants' conference to chat about the free help his team offers. It includes giving support with registering for the PSR if you are unsure about doing it yourself, and giving away energy-saving household items like electric blankets. Call the free helpline on **0800 107 0044** for details.

# UPGRADE READY



**We spend over a million a year on home improvements. As well as kitchens, we've recently replaced bathrooms, heating systems, windows and doors.**

Budget is tight so work is prioritised by the age of the fitting to be upgraded. We visit a selection of homes each year to do a condition survey which is used to plan for the next round of improvements.

When everything is ready, we write to let you know your home is next on the list for a specific upgrade. You can also ask us for information about your home at any time.

# MANJIT JOINS TEAM

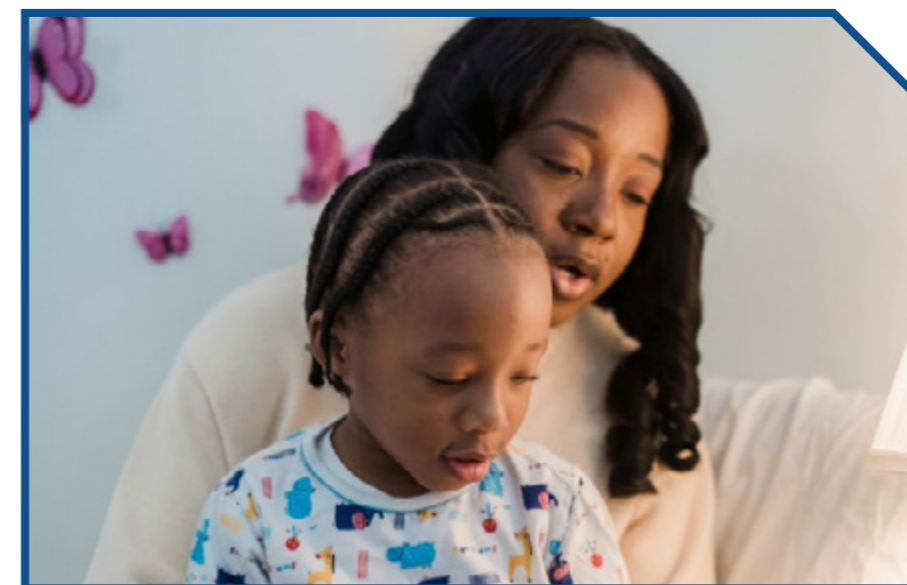
**We've boosted our support for tenant involvement. New team member Manjit is working with Marcia Cunnison in the new job role of community partnership and engagement assistant.**

Manjit brings experience gained working in housing consultancy and the building materials industry.

At Nehemiah, Manjit coordinates our handling of complaints. This new role has already improved our performance in our response times and actions.

You may recall speaking to Manjit recently while she worked with two colleagues to update the tenant data we hold. The details are collected under equality law to ensure fairness. It also helps us to better understand your needs and spot any service gaps.

Manjit provides support including at estate walkabouts and in scheme meetings with tenants. "I really enjoy these opportunities to meet and talk to so many of you," says Manjit.



# TSM SCORES



**The results are in! You are more highly satisfied with our services than you were last year. We're over the moon – but not satisfied. There are always more ways for us to improve.**

Your level of satisfaction is measured by national Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

These show how we are performing compared to previous years and to other similar landlords. The results are the views of 357 Nehemiah tenants, chosen at random by independent researchers for a telephone survey at three points in the year.

Your scoring for 2025/6 put us in the top range of the best 25% of housing associations. We improved in all key areas compared to the previous year (given below in brackets). For example:

**83% (78%) of you are satisfied with our overall service**

**91% (79%) are satisfied with our repairs service**

**83% (73%) are satisfied with the time taken to do your last repair**

**86% (79%) are satisfied your home is well maintained**

**80% (72%) agree we listen and act on your views**

"We've focused on tackling areas you told us we could improve – such as speedier high-quality repairs and better communication. So it's rewarding to know this is making a positive difference to you," explains Marcia Cunnison, our community partnership and engagement officer. "There's always more to do to achieve service excellence – for example, in areas with lower satisfaction levels such as maintenance of communal areas and complaint handling."

Read more about our performance and plans on our website or ask us for a printed copy.

A big thanks to all who got involved in the TSM surveys. The next one is in July 2026. Please take part if you get a call.

# RISKY FOR MEN



**Black men are at a greater risk of getting prostate cancer than other men. One in four black men will develop it, double that of men in the general population.**

They are also more likely to get it a younger age, and for the condition to be more aggressive. The risk is far higher if you have a family history of prostate cancer.

"Talking and testing are vital when the odds are so high," says Junior Hemans (pictured above left), a board member at Nehemiah, and a survivor of prostate cancer.

Junior set up the support group BROS – Brothers Reaching Out to/for Support – and works with health bodies and others to raise awareness.

He is now part of a campaign by Prostate Cancer UK and West Midlands Cancer Alliance to encourage black men age 45 and over to get tested.

Most men with early prostate cancer don't have any symptoms. And the blood test – called a PSA test – is not offered as routine screening.

"That's why it's important for men to be aware of the risk, talk openly and ask their GP for a test," explains Junior.

He has a message too if you unwisely avoid going to doctors. "It's not a badge of honour to say you've not been to your GP for ages. You get your car checked regularly, so why not yourself? It costs nothing but time. Yet it may give you a lifetime – and save more of you as a man."

# UNITED ACTIONS

**Making improvements is not something done to tenants. It is done with you.**

Your voice was heard and action taken in these recent examples of what we've done, thanks to your complaints and other feedback.

- **Arranged** for CCTV cameras in the residents' car park at a Nehemiah Court in Walsall, to pilot a way to stop unauthorised use by other people.
- **Fitted** insulation in a closed-off part of a home's roof space that was causing condensation on a tenant's bedroom ceiling.
- **Told** a cleaning contractor of communal areas at a Birmingham housing site to improve information to tenants by displaying and signing its tasks list and rota.
- **Supported** tenants at Dudley's Henry Court to continue to care for their beautiful communal garden.
- **Increased** focus on outcomes and learning from complaints, plus making sure our responses to you are full and on time.
- **Published** an easy-read guide on what we do to tackle damp and mould, plus tips for reducing moisture in the home.



- **Instructed** a gardening contractor to revisit a site in Handsworth to improve its work quality.
- **Revised** the compensation policy so it is clearer and supported with staff refresher training, so it is used consistently when resolving your complaints.
- **Strengthened** our pre-lettings maintenance checklist, after a tenant's floor was damaged by a radiator leak that was missed at the home's inspection.
- **Improved** our tenant engagement strategy with fresh input from tenants.
- **Responded** to a new tenant's individual needs with wellbeing 'check-in' calls they found reassuring during a difficult time personally.

# GOOD CALL

**Your satisfaction with our repairs service has risen to a high of 91% (read more on page 4). The improvement ties in with the launch of our new call centre for repairs, run by Frontier Comms. So what brings the magic touch? Abby Leitch from the call centre tells us more.**

**We started afresh.** Nehemiah wanted a new repairs line and I joined Frontier to set it up. I've experience in troubleshooting for businesses by putting in new practices. I began in August 2025, trained my team during September and we went live in October. It happened fast!

**Existing pitfalls were understood,** thanks to tenants' feedback through complaints and satisfaction ratings. To improve, the right culture and processes were needed. It's worked wonderfully quickly to get good results.

**Communication is key.** Tenants, quite rightly, want to be listened to. You're the expert on the repair

issue because you're living with it. Contractors want to do a good job – and need specific information to do it. With the communication process flowing smoothly, everything can run efficiently.

**We want to make tenants happy.** Our approach is to be caring, professional and honest about what can be done. We try to handle every call in the way that best suits you.

**We're not asking you questions to be annoying!** The details we gather about your repair are used so the right contractor visits you and the repair is fixed quickly. Most tenants are understanding of our fact checking questions so the work done is a 'first time fix'.

**We take around 800 of your calls a month,** plus repair requests from staff. We're local and available 24/7. Your job requests are put directly onto Nehemiah's system and ordered in real-time, saving effort and speeding up the process.



**Thank you for your compliments.** We're pleased to have begun our relationship so positively. We want to continue to serve you well now, and in the future.

# BUMP UP

**Distressingly, a third of domestic abuse starts during pregnancy and increases after birth.**

It can lead to serious health issues for the mother and baby. Children who grow up exposed to domestic abuse are also victims.

Every situation is different. But for some abusers, their partner's pregnancy is seen as a threat to their control, triggering jealousy, stress or anger. To gain power, abuse – whether physical, emotional, verbal, or financial – can often begin or worsen.

This does not make it okay. We will always support you if you are affected.

Please speak to us. Or call lines such as the National Domestic Violence Helpline (**0808 2000 247**) or the Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Abuse Helpline for the West Midlands (**0800 953 9777**). In an emergency call the police.

To help someone, call Crimestoppers (it's 100% anonymous) on 0800 555111. If you're worried you are behaving abusively in your relationship, call the Respect Phonenumber on **0808 802 4040**.



# MONEY ABUSE

**Your adult son is struggling and you naturally want to help. He asks to share your bank account. Then empties it of your money.**

You ask your granddaughter to help with some shopping. She uses your card to buy a few groceries – then withdraws £400 for herself.

These are the real experiences of some Nehemiah tenants who are being supported by Nehemiah to win back control of their finances.



Financial abuse can take different forms and can happen to anyone. Abusers can be partners, family members or others, such as friends or carers. Sometimes it takes time to realise you are being financially abused or for you to label what is happening as abuse.

But if you feel uncomfortable about the way that someone you know is behaving with your money, they may be financially abusing you. Be wary too if someone misuses their lasting power of attorney for you – for example, by failing to pay your bills or leaving you without enough food.

Taking the first steps to break free of financial abuse may seem scary, but you don't have to do it alone. Our safeguarding policy is here to protect you. Ask us, or your bank, for help and advice at any time. If you face immediate danger, call the police.

## Tips to protect yourself

- Never give out your card, pin number or passwords to anyone.
- Do not rely on any one person helping you with your money.
- Check your bank statements and make sure you know what the transactions are.
- If someone shops for you, give them cash and be clear about what change you expect.
- Ask your bank to put a limit on your withdrawals.
- Pay your rent and other bills by direct debit.
- Talk to others if something feels wrong.

# JET WASH

**Sometimes bathtime is better without an actual bath!**

Norah struggled to get into her bath when her mobility became limited. It's now been replaced with a level-access shower and seat, complete with new tiles and flooring.

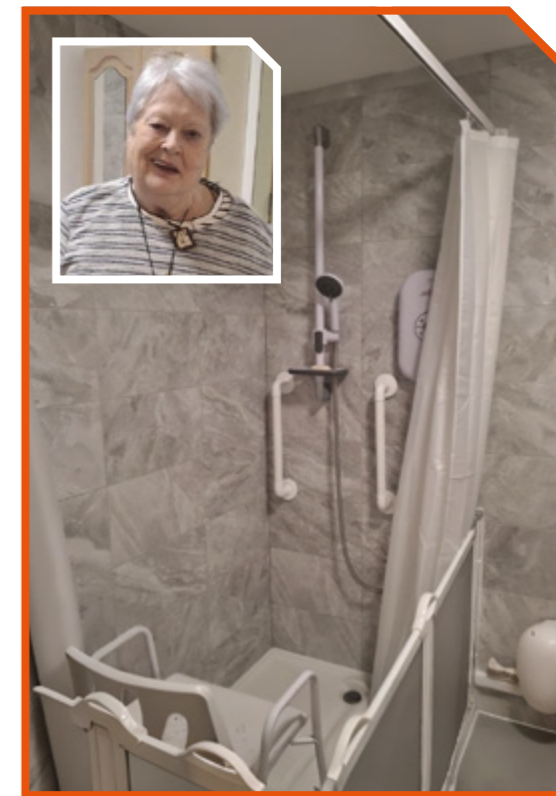
"The change is beautiful," she says happily. "It's given me back some independence. I can easily get in and enjoy a proper shower."

On discovering she needed help, Norah applied to her council for support to stay independent at home. An occupational therapist assessed her needs and recommended a suitable adaptation to Birmingham City Council to arrange. It took two weeks to fit, although the wait for the work to begin was much longer.

Councils can provide aids and adaptations funded through Disabled Facilities Grants. As landlord, we support grant applications, like we did for Norah, and give permission for the changes.

We also carry out some works ourselves, such as putting in level-access showers during planned maintenance work and fitting smaller items like grab rails.

An assessment by an occupational therapist is usually the first step, as it makes sure any change is safe and right for your needs.



# GROWING PROBLEM

**It started with him clearing a book shelf. It felt better than he expected. Slowly but surely Harry\* did more. Cutting the piles of stuff that had taken over his home. Now he could actually get into his lounge and watch TV. Better still, he could invite his grandson round for tea.**

"Harry is doing really well," says our tenancy support officer, Lusefa. "It can take months to build trust with someone to help them gain the confidence and motivation to tackle their hoarding. The reward is a happier and safer way of living."

Filling your home with your purchases and collections can be fun. It becomes a problem when too much clutter starts shrinking your home and your life. Can you still use every room for its intended purpose? Does it interfere with daily life, like cooking and sleeping?

People with hoarding disorder amass extreme amounts they struggle to discard. This mental health problem can include collecting objects, gathering pets, or constantly shopping for more.

The chaos and anxiety it causes damages relationships and quality of life. It also results in unsafe living conditions, such as blocked pathways, fire risks and restricted access for repairs.



The reasons for hoarding can be complex, but there is often an emotional trigger. There could be family history of hoarding, strongly held beliefs about discarding items – 'I may need these' – or using it to cope with



a stressful life event like a bereavement. Whatever the cause, asking for help is the first step in finding relief and getting on top of things.

"Working with you, we're non-judgemental," explains Lusefa. "For example, we start by looking at picture cards together to agree where your home is on a clutter rating scale. We set small manageable goals, giving you choice and control. We then take and compare photos at my visits to see the progress being made."

If hoarding is an issue for you, get in touch. We also work with other specialists to find the right practical or emotional support to help. As Lusefa says, "It's satisfying to see someone's reaction to a room opening up – and to life's possibilities as a result."

\*Not his real name. Image for illustration and is not a Nehemiah tenant's home.

# RIGHT TOGETHER

**Experienced housing professional Janette Beckett welcomes complaints – as a way to improve services for tenants.**

Janette leads a supported housing charity. She also brings her skills to Nehemiah's governing board, where she is the chair of our operations committee and now the board member responsible for complaints.

Janette spoke at our recent tenants' conference about her passion for making sure your voice is heard.

Not everyone could be in the room that day. So here's a special recap of her message to you.

"Complaints are a positive thing. It shows us you feel confident to tell us something isn't working. We learn from mistakes so we can improve how we deliver our services to you.

Throughout my housing career, I encourage staff to view complaints as being about the process. When you tell us something isn't working, you're not venting or nagging. You are helping us to fine-tune our services. For example, you may be highlighting a flaw in the system – or pushing us to work more efficiently to avoid a delay.

Your complaint does not stay with the staff member who receives or deals with it. It influences how we work. It comes to the Nehemiah board to explore deeper, look at any patterns and the areas for change.

We want to avoid 'black holes' and 'box ticking' and the frustration they cause you. This year you've helped us to focus on communication, quality control and accessibility – because excellence shouldn't be hard to find.



It's also a shared responsibility. Let's continue together to turn the bad into good by fixing the things that need improving. And let's celebrate the good, and do more of what's working for you."

# MONEY TALK

**Worried about debt? Struggling to pay your rent?**

Don't struggle alone. Please ask for free and impartial support from Birmingham Settlement. Its helpful advisors have eased the burden of money worries for 121 Nehemiah tenants in the last year.

Details of what you discuss are not shared with us. Just ask your housing officer to refer you – or call Birmingham Settlement direct on **0121 250 3000** and tell them you are a Nehemiah tenant.



## Made for you, with you

This newsletter uses your feedback to cover the issues you are interested in. Something missing? Want to get more involved? Please let our community partnership and engagement officer Marcia Cunnison know if you have a story, content idea, or would like more details on any topic featured.

**Call: 0121 358 8031 or 07739 705048**

**Email: [marcia.cunnison@nehemiah.co.uk](mailto:marcia.cunnison@nehemiah.co.uk)**

**Write: Nehemiah Housing Association, 1-3 Beacon Court, Birmingham Road, Great Barr, Birmingham, B43 6NN**

**Web: [www.nehemiah.co.uk](http://www.nehemiah.co.uk)**

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NehemiahHousingAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/NehemiahHousingAssociation)**