

Autumn 2025

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ORBIT LIFE

Highlights from your Customer Annual Report - Making it your home, together

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Everyday
Excellence in
action: Your
community, a
click away

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Introducing our guest editor, Harri Bains

Hi everyone! I'm Harri, and I'm so happy to be the guest editor for this edition of Orbit Life. I've been a customer for just over three years, and in that time, the support I've received has really helped me grow in confidence and independence.

I live with my lovely therapy dog, Theo. Getting out for walks with Theo is one of the ways I keep my mental health in check – a bit of fresh air and his happy tail always improves my mood! Turn to page four to find more of my top tips to help you support your wellbeing. As a qualified makeup and hair artist, helping people get creative and feel good about themselves is my little way of spreading positivity.

If you ever feel like you could use a bit of extra help or guidance, I'd really encourage you to take a look at Orbit's free Better Days programme. It is set up to help customers like you and me, offering confidential support on everything from mental health and wellbeing to managing money and supporting you to live independently. No matter what you're facing, there's someone ready to listen and help you find the right way forward.

In this edition you'll find lots of advice and inspiration. We share the highlights from Orbit's Customer Annual Report – celebrating what we've achieved together. If you're looking for something cosy to cook, don't miss a comforting recipe on page 10, that you can easily whip up at home.

This issue is all about connection and community, because for me, being part of Orbit means there's always someone ready to lend you a helping hand.

Happy reading!



Head to our Better Days
webpage to learn more about
how we can support you!

Visit orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/help-support

Keeping you safe where it matters most

This Autumn, one of the biggest changes to UK housing law has been introduced – Awaab's Law – and it is all about keeping you and your household safe.

In 2020, two-year-old Awaab Ishak tragically lost his life because of prolonged exposure to large amounts of mould in his home. His story shocked the nation and led to a powerful call for change.

As a result, the law has now changed, landlords must deal with serious or emergency hazards within set timeframes, ensuring homes are safe and healthy for everyone.

Working even harder to keep you safe

When you get in touch about a problem, we'll look at what's happening to decide if it's an emergency hazard and what needs to happen next.

- For example, we look at whether damp and mould is widespread, located in a bedroom, or present in the home of someone with higher health risks.
- We take into account if you have babies or young children in your home, are elderly, or if anyone in your household has a weakened immune system, asthma, allergies, or other respiratory conditions.

Get smart about damp, mould and condensation

You can find out more about our commitment to you and the timeline for repairs on our dedicated webpage. Visit orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/dmc

- This page will take you to an online form where you can report significant cases of damp and mould in your home. It's important that you get in touch with us as soon as you can if you find damp and mould in your home, so we can clearly understand what needs to be addressed right away
- Check out our **updated guide to damp, mould and condensation** on the page. It can help you with tips on reducing condensation in your home, how to manage damp and mould, and how to keep your home warm.



Say no to 'no win, no fee' claims firms

This change in law may be seen as an opportunity for claims management companies to target you about any damp and mould in your home. These companies are often operating illegally and can put you at significant financial risk, or cause delays in getting your problem sorted. If you're dealing with damp and mould in your home, please report it to us as soon as possible. We will sort it for you.



Looking after yourself this Autumn

As the days get shorter and temperatures drop, it's more important than ever to look after your health and wellbeing. Autumn is a great time to slow down and enjoy cosy moments indoors, but for some it might also bring challenges.

Our guest editor, Harri, has shared some of her top tips to help you support your wellbeing and leave you feeling calm and relaxed.

Move a little every day: You don't need to run a marathon – just a bit of gentle movement can work wonders.

“I love taking my therapy dog, Theo, out for a walk in the autumn – feeling the leaves crunching beneath my feet and the cold breeze is so refreshing.” says Harri.

Connect with others: When the days get darker it's easy to hunker down, but staying connected really helps.

“Keep in touch with your friends, family, or neighbours,” Harri suggests.

“A quick chat can really brighten your day.”

Try something new: Autumn is a great time to pick up a hobby or skill.

“Learning something new can give you a real boost,” says Harri.

“Crafting helps me when I'm feeling anxious and worried – colouring or making birthday cards helps me to focus my mind.”

Why not start in the kitchen? Turn to page 10 for a delicious cottage pie recipe – guaranteed to be a crowd pleaser!

Reset your sleep: Try winding down with a warm drink and turning off screens an hour before you turn in for a better night's rest.



Reach out: If things start to feel heavy, remember that you don't have to face it alone.

“We all need a bit of support sometimes,” says Harri.

“Talking to someone can really help you see things more clearly.”

The Better Days programme is always here for you, offering free, confidential support and resources whenever you need them. Whether you're looking for advice, a listening ear, or just some reassurance, there's always someone ready to help.

Visit [Better Days here](#).

As Harri puts it: “It's important to acknowledge that life is tough sometimes – but you don't have to go it alone. Be kind to yourself and appreciate the little things.”

So, wrap up warm, make time for what makes you feel good, and remember that taking care of yourself is the best way to welcome the new season.



Living in a Later Living and Supported Housing scheme?

At Orbit, we believe that sometimes, just a little support is all it takes to help you feel your best.

If you live in a Later Living community, our ‘How are you?’ service offers friendly check-ins on Monday - Friday, at a time that suits you – helping you stay connected, while respecting your privacy and independence.

If you opt in to this service, we'll agree with you how often you would like to be contacted, and we'll get in touch for a friendly chat to check-in and see how you're doing. If you need any extra help or support, we can put you in touch with our Better Days partners who can support with your mental health, getting online or managing your money.

You can ‘opt in’ or ‘opt out’ of the service at any time. You can also decide how often we contact you and how. Want to learn more? **Chat to your Scheme Officer or Manager to find out more.**



Making it your home, together.

Highlights from your Customer Annual Report, April 2024 - March 2025



“We're proud of what
we've achieved together
— and we're listening
more than ever.”

— Orbit Customer Engagement Team

Your voice shapes everything we do. Our aim is to help you feel proud of your home and confident in the service you receive.

In this year's Customer Annual Report, you'll see how your feedback has guided real improvements, what's already changing for the better, and some plans for the future.

There's more work ahead, but we're on this journey together, listening, learning, and making things better with you at the heart of it all.

Here's a snapshot of what your feedback has helped us do:

- Invest £149 million to make your homes safer, warmer and more comfortable
- Build 901 new homes – most of them affordable, helping families like yours take their next step
- Deliver £26.3 million in social value, creating positive impact for customers, communities and the environment
- More of you told us you feel safe and respected, and that your homes are well looked after.

You told us it's the everyday things that make the biggest difference – getting repairs done right, answering calls quickly, and keeping you in the loop when something goes wrong.

We've been working hard to make those everyday moments smoother.

Here's what's changed:

- Repairs are being completed faster, and more people are satisfied with the service.
- It's now easier to raise an issue, more of you are now happy with how these are handled.
- You've told us how important it is to have a safe, healthy home. Our teams have carried out thousands of checks and repairs to tackle damp, mould and condensation. Thanks to your feedback, more customers are already seeing fewer problems in their homes.
- Every home that needed a gas safety check got one – with all checks now 100% completed.

“It's good to see Orbit listening and taking action. You can really see the difference.”

— Gary, Engaged Customer

What you tell us makes a real difference. Hundreds of you joined online sessions, answered surveys, or came along to community events. Together, we're shaping the future of Orbit services.

Some highlights from this year:

- More customers than ever got involved and shared their views.
- Dozens of small but important changes came directly from your feedback.
- Over 31,000 people now use myAccount to manage their home online, making it easier to stay in control.
- Our service quality was rated excellent by customers who took part in our Net Promoter Score survey.

We all want to live somewhere that feels safe, supportive and connected. With the Better Days service, you can get support for the things that matter most to you, helping you feel confident about your money, wellbeing, and future opportunities.

Over the last year we've:

- Supported thousands of customers to manage money, feel confident and find support
- Helped hundreds of people boost their mental wellbeing
- Made homes greener and cheaper to run with energy upgrades and solar panels
- Continued to invest in Later Living homes and grow our network of community hubs

Together, we're building stronger, fairer, greener communities – and it's only possible because of you.

“Thank you for being part of the journey.”

Want to help shape what happens next?

Join our Engaged Customer network at orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/shareyourviews – we'd love to have you.



Read the full Customer Annual Report at orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/publications/reports-archive or scan the QR code.



Your neighbourhood, your community

— now just a click away

It's now even easier for you to stay connected with us, so we can provide the support that matters most to you.

Your brand-new Neighbourhood webpage is now live — designed around where you live, the people who support you, and the services available in your local area.

From London to East Anglia, the Midlands to the Southeast, our teams are based right in the heart of our neighbourhoods.

It's all part of Everyday Excellence, our commitment to providing consistently great services and experiences for every customer.

You can also use our simple postcode search tool to find out which area you live in and who your Neighbourhood Manager is — **just pop in your postcode to get started.**

Take a look, explore what's happening in your community, and find new ways to get involved or share feedback.



Nominate your Neighbour of the Year!

As we wrap up the year, it's your chance to reflect on the kindness in your community and nominate your Neighbour of the Year.

Whether it's someone who puts out your bins when you forget, lends a hand day-to-day, or goes above and beyond as a neighbour, now's the time to show your appreciation.

Closing 30 December, nominate your neighbour here.

Nominate today, and your chosen neighbour could win a £100 Love2shop voucher!



Cosy up with a classic:

The perfect cottage pie for Autumn evenings

With its rich, savoury filling and fluffy mash potato topping, this easy classic is the perfect way to enjoy a cosy Autumn evening.

This recipe is great for batch cooking - one of the ways to help save those pennies on food costs!

You'll need:

Ingredients:

- 1 kg potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 carrots peeled, halved lengthways and chopped into chunks
- 500g beef mince (use plant-based mince or finely chopped lentils or mushrooms for a meat-free version)
- 1 beef or vegetable stock cube
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 500ml boiling water
- Salt and pepper to taste
- A small knob of butter
- A splash of milk

This is one of those meals that makes a chilly evening feel cosy again. It's wholesome, comforting, and something the whole family can enjoy!

Instructions

1. Pre-heat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 7.
2. Put the chopped potatoes into a saucepan. Pour over enough boiling water to cover well and bring back to the boil. Turn down and simmer until the potatoes are soft.
3. While the potatoes are boiling, put the olive oil, diced onion and chopped carrots into a large frying pan. Fry gently for about 5 minutes until soft.
4. Turn up the heat and add your chosen filling. Break up the filling with a spatula and continue to fry until the mince is browned or the vegetables are soft.
5. Set aside the filling and make a simple gravy by crumbling the stock cube into a jug and adding the plain flour. Mix to a smooth paste using a small amount of cold water and then add 500ml boiling water to the jug, stirring constantly.
6. Pour the gravy into the pan with the mince and stir. Simmer on a low heat for about 5 minutes.
7. When the potatoes are ready, drain and mash them with the butter and milk, with salt and pepper to taste.
8. Add your mince to the bottom of an oven dish and top with mash. Use a fork to spread the mash evenly over the top.
9. Cook for 20 minutes in your preheated oven until nicely brown on top. Serve and enjoy with whatever veg you'd like.



Could a home swap be your next move?

Is your home too big, too small, in the wrong location, or have your circumstances changed?

If you're interested in meeting other people living in social housing whose homes don't meet their needs anymore, you might be suitable for a mutual exchange.

Mutual exchange is where two households agree to swap homes with each other. It might be possible to swap with another Orbit customer, someone with a different social housing provider or another local authority tenant. It's a permanent swap and may be a good option for you if you are not in a high banding for housing with the Local Authority or wanting to move to another local authority area.

There are some criteria you must meet to be able to swap homes, such as not being in rent arrears. You can find a full list and a helpful video on the mutual exchange process on our [website](#).



Want to learn more? Head over to the Homeswapper website.

It's the UK's biggest online service for anyone living in social housing who wants to swap homes. You can search for homes, speak to other people who want to swap homes and seek support and advice if you need it.

Seasonal Safety

As the festive season approaches, your home is busy with family, friends and fun. We want everyone to have a safe and happy time, so please help us keep you safe.

It's a good time of year to remind yourself of some important fire safety tips:

- Check your Christmas lights carry the British safety sign and that the wiring is not damaged.
- Make a quick bedtime safety check part of your routine. Before you head to bed, switch off Christmas lights at the sockets, make sure cigarettes are completely out, and blow out any candles. A few simple steps can help keep your home safe.
- Test your smoke detectors every month and let us know right away if you notice any issues.
- If you live in a block, please take a moment to review the fire evacuation strategy. You'll find it displayed in the communal area near the entrance doors.
- It's important that if you have a flat fire door that requires an annual inspection you arrange to have this completed by us.



Why not take a moment to **visit our Fire Safety page?** 

You'll find helpful tips on safe cooking, using electricals, and handling candles during the festive season. A quick read can make your celebrations safe and stress-free.

Spotlight on Community Hubs: Job Club



Looking for work, thinking about a new career, or getting ready to jump back into the job market?

To find out when the next session is running, check out our events page or speak to your local team – we'd love to see you there!



You don't have to do it alone. Our Job Clubs, held monthly at your local Community Hub, can help you build confidence, learn new skills and take positive steps towards your next opportunity - and it won't cost you a penny.

Each session offers friendly, practical support to help you on your job search. You can get one-to-one help with your CV and applications, support to search for jobs more effectively - both online and locally - and the chance to practice your interview skills in a safe space.

Job Club is about more than finding work - here, you'll find a place to build confidence and community. You'll gain useful knowledge, meet new people and feel support along every step of your search.

Whether you're changing direction, returning to work, or exploring something completely new, our Community Hubs and Job Club can help you take those next steps with confidence.



Save energy, stay comfortable: **Power Up Your Energy Savings**

As we head into winter, keeping your home warm and energy bills manageable is becoming more important.

When Elaine noticed her energy bills rising last winter, she wasn't sure where to start. After hearing about Orbit's Energy Advisory Service, she decided to find out more, and quickly discovered how a few small changes could make a big difference.

With help from our Energy Advisory Service, Elaine learned simple ways to use her energy more efficiently, understand her bills, and feel more confident managing her outgoings. Since then, she's felt more in control, prepared for the colder months, and has saved over £600 on her bills.

We know that dealing with energy tariffs or switching providers can be confusing - and can

take a lot of time and effort. Our expert Energy Advisors can make it easy for you, helping you to understand your bills, find ways to reduce costs, and make your home more energy efficient – all without compromising on comfort. Whether you're looking for guidance on switching to a better tariff, learning how to use your heating more effectively, or understanding how small changes can save you money, we're here to support you.

To access the service, all you need to do is complete this quick and simple **form**  or you can get in touch with a member of the team to help you get started.

**Looking
for support?**

**Visit our cost-of-
living hub.** 

How to use your new air source heat pump

Just had an air source heat pump installed? We've launched a guide to help you understand how it works. From using the thermostat through to some frequently asked questions, the guide should help you make the most of this new low-carbon heat source.

What are air source heat pumps?

Air source heat pumps are a low-carbon method of supplying your home with heating and hot water. They take warmth from the air outside, which is used to heat the water that then supplies your home. They're more efficient than traditional heat generating systems because they move heat rather than generating it by burning fuel.

They're not suitable for everyone, though, as you need space available outside your home for an outdoor unit to be installed. You also need good insulation in your home to feel the cost-saving benefits.

Check out the new guide on our website. 



Prefer to speak to us directly?

We'd love to hear from you! Email our Customer Engagement team at customer.engagement@orbit.org.uk to find out how you can take part and make a difference.

We want to hear from you!

Join our **'Your Voice' Facebook Group** to share your thoughts, take part in discussions and connect with other Orbit customers.

You can also visit orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/shareyourviews  to find out more.



Get in touch:

You can visit our website:
orbitcustomerhub.org.uk

For more information, please contact us at:
orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/contact-us

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