



Spring 2025

orbitcustomerhub.org.uk

ORBIT LIFE

Better Days feature

Pages 6 & 7



Highlights from
our Your Voice
Awareness Week
Page 3

Time to dine
al fresco
Page 9



Follow us on social @orbithousing


Meet our guest resident editor

Gary Kemp



Visit Orbit's
**'Share your
views'**  webpage
to learn more

Meet Gary, an Engaged Customer from Milton Keynes and guest editor of this edition of Orbit Life...

*I've been an Orbit resident for seven years now. I decided to get involved as an Engaged Customer as I felt it was a good way to learn and share my opinion on topics that affect all residents. I find the online meetings to be particularly enjoyable and informative and encourage anyone who is thinking about getting involved to do so. Not only will you help review and shape services, so that all customers benefit, you'll also have the opportunity to meet new people and earn Love2shop reward vouchers. Visit Orbit's **'Share your views'**  web page to learn more.*

In this edition of Orbit Life, there's a special feature on the official opening of your newest Orbit Community Hub in Daventry at Micklegate Park, as well as the launch of some new face-to-face myLearning training sessions. Read about Orbit's new mental health support partner, Health Assured, and the support available to you through the Better Days support programme. See pages six and seven.

On page eight, you can find out more about how our Engaged Customers helped shape the future experience for all Orbit customers in a workshop for our Everyday Excellence transformation programme. There's also an update on our recent repairs and planned maintenance survey on page five.

Ever fancied a day in front of a camera?

If so, then we need you! We want to use photos of Orbit customers in our customer information, so we'll be selecting a range of customers from all walks of life to join us for a fun photo shoot. We encourage customers of all genders, ethnicities, and ages to apply. To find out more, visit our **website** 



Making 'Your Voice' heard



Our 'Your Voice Awareness Week' ran from 31 March to 4 April. During the week, we showed you all the ways you can get involved, share your feedback and connect with different teams across Orbit. We met with everyone through Microsoft Teams and Facebook, making it super easy for everyone to join in, no matter where they live.


Our Customer Engagement team kicked off the event by hosting a Facebook live stream where they shared how easy it is to give your feedback. They also highlighted some of the important changes to our services that have been made as a result of customer involvement. Later in the week, we held some 'question and answer' sessions with our Estate Services team, who look after things such as the communal ground maintenance and window cleaning on your estate. We held another session with our Planned Maintenance team, who focus on bathroom and kitchen upgrades as well as roofing and window replacements.



As the week wrapped up, we held a feedback session about our repairs service and asked customers what you really value most. We're currently reviewing all of this feedback, so that we can make the changes you've told us you want to see as part of our new Everyday Excellence programme. Everyday Excellence is our plan to make sure we achieve our aim of delivering among the best service of any housing association in the country by 2030. You can read more about Everyday Excellence on page eight.

Interested? We have plenty of activities lined up where you can get involved, share your thoughts, and earn Love2shop vouchers. We can't wait for you to join us!

How to get involved

Interested in joining the fun? Search for our Your Voice Facebook Group for regular updates, visit orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/shareyourviews  or email us at customer.engagement@orbit.org.uk to let us know you'd like to participate.



How our out-of-hours emergency service works



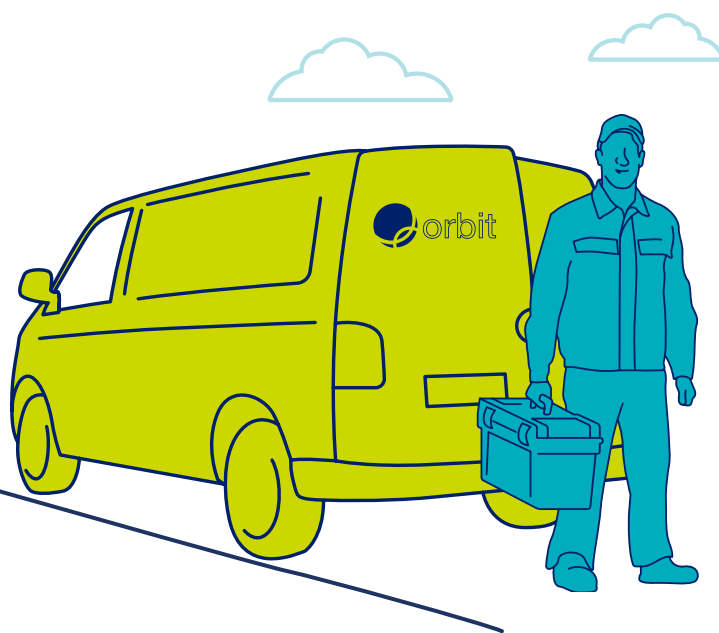
We're here to keep you and those you live with safe, so if you have an emergency, you should call our out-of-hours service on 0800 678 1221. It is answered by a third-party provider on our behalf. You'll reach our out-of-hours service if you call us from 8pm to 8am Monday to Saturday, from 1pm Saturday until 8am on Monday, or any time on a bank holiday.


If we attend an out-of-hours emergency, we'll make it safe then and there, but we may not be able to complete the repair. Any non-essential follow-up work will be completed in usual working hours. Any general enquiries or non-emergency calls will be referred to us to be resolved in normal working hours.

What is an emergency?

Emergencies are defined as any situation where there's an immediate risk to someone's health, safety or security, such as:

- **Your heating or hot water system failing**
- **An uncontrollable water leak**
- **A complete failure of your electrics (where it isn't an appliance or supplier issue)**
- **A threat of severe flooding**
- **Loss of security to entrance doors or windows.**



This isn't a complete list, but rather a few examples of what we define as an emergency. If you suspect a gas leak, you should call National Grid on 0800 111 999. You can find more information about our out-of-hours emergency service on our [website](#) .




Click and check

You may have seen we've launched a new online **Repairs Responsibility Tool**, designed to help us deliver a better repairs service.

We're here to help you keep your home in good condition, however there are some repairs that you have responsibility for. These will differ depending on the type of repair needed and the type of tenancy you have.

We understand it can be confusing to understand who's responsible for what, but now, before you raise a repair, you can check first whether it might be your responsibility to fix.

We've made the tool simple to use with clear room layouts and easy to identify symbols.

- If a repair is your responsibility, you can find lots of easy-to-follow 'Fix It' videos covering some of the most common repairs, showing you how to get the job done
- If a repair is our responsibility, the tool will ask you to raise a repair through [myAccount](#) .



Roz Hosiene, an Engaged Customer who attended the customer engagement sessions where the tool was discussed, said:

"It's important that customers have a clear understanding of the repairs service. This includes who has responsibility for what and the timescales different repairs could take to be completed. It needs to be accessible by everyone and consideration is taken into any individual's circumstances. Being able to access this information on the customer website will help customers to understand how it works and what they can expect when raising a repair."

Visit [Repairs Responsibilities](#)  to get started.

Repairs and planned maintenance survey

At the beginning of 2025 we launched a survey to get your feedback on our repairs and planned maintenance services. This was an important part of the process that we're going through to acquire new contractor partners to deliver these services from 2027.

We had a fantastic response to the survey and would like to thank all those who took the time to complete it. We're now reviewing the findings and will share these with you when we can. We'll also incorporate your feedback into our future requirements for our partners and into our Everyday Excellence plans (more on page eight), so we can be sure we are focused on delivering services that meet your needs.

A formal consultation will get underway later in the year and we'll provide more information about this as we get into the summer months.



New Orbit Community Hub in Daventry

On 8 March, we officially opened the latest **Orbit Community Hub at Micklewell Park** in Daventry.

The hub offers local people access to free advice and guidance on a range of issues such as managing money, caring for your wellbeing, looking for work and developing your digital skills as part of our Better Days programme. The hub also provides a space for community-run events and activities.

Over 75 customers came along on the day to help open the hub and take part in face painting and crafts. Chair of West Northamptonshire Council, Councillor Jo Gilford, and the Mayor of Daventry, Councillor Karen Tweedale, also joined in the celebrations.


Louise Millington, Better Days Hub Lead for Orbit, said: "Having a local presence and being able to offer you the face-to-face support you may need to lead a happy, healthy and fulfilled life is really



Micklewell customers and members of the Micklewell Neighbourhood Watch group helped us celebrate the opening of the new Orbit Community Hub.

important to us. We hope that everyone at Micklewell Park finds that the hub offers a safe and welcoming place for the local community."



In June, we're going to be officially opening another Orbit Community Hub in Erith, South London. We'll tell you more in the summer edition of Orbit Life, out in August.

If you'd like to find out more about events that are taking place near you, just visit our [**events webpage**](#) 

Expert help to support your wellbeing

We're pleased to tell you about Health Assured, our new myWellbeing programme partner. They can offer you free and confidential support, as well as expert advice on a wide range of personal issues, including:

- **Mental health support:** Guidance and counselling for improving your mental wellbeing
- **Stress management:** Help with managing stress and building resilience
- **General wellbeing:** Support with everyday challenges and personal issues
- **Access to their Wisdom app:** Including a range of self-help resources and tools for managing your mental health
- **24/7 helpline:** Available anytime for immediate support and advice
- **Guided therapy:** In-person and digital therapy sessions to help with personal wellbeing.

Whether you need counselling or any support to do with your wellbeing, Health Assured is here to provide professional guidance whenever you need it. To find out more, visit our [**MyWellbeing**](#) . You can also complete our 'advice and support' form at [**Orbit Customer Hub**](#) .

Increase your understanding of the online world

We have four new in-person training modules available to help you get online and build your confidence in the digital world. The courses are delivered face-to-face in our Orbit Community Hubs and Independent Living schemes.

The courses available are:

Digital resilience: getting online and staying safe


Email communications: setting up and sending emails safely

Getting online to manage your tenancy successfully

Digital skills: developing confidence online - online shopping and everyday practical apps



Each course is two hours and will be given in small groups of six, so that you can receive individual support and ask questions. For customers without a digital device, such as a smartphone, iPad or laptop, we can provide these to use during the course.

To find out more or to book your place on one of our courses, please visit, [Orbit Customer Hub](#)  or speak with your Community Hub Connector or Independent Living Scheme Manager to sign you up.

Mental Health Awareness Week 2025

Mental Health Awareness Week ran from 12 to 18 May and recognised the importance of looking after our minds, just as we do our bodies. Whether you're managing stress, anxiety, or just feeling overwhelmed, the first step towards better mental health is acknowledging it's okay to ask for help.

Our Better Days myWellbeing programme, in partnership with Health Assured, is here to provide the support you need, whenever you need it. Available 24/7 through phone, email, or live chat, expert advice and guidance are just a call away. Taking small, manageable steps can make a big difference. From practising self-care to learning coping strategies, you don't have to navigate mental health challenges alone.

Reach out, take care of yourself, and remember that support is always available. You're not alone on this journey – we're here to help you prioritise your wellbeing.

Take the first step today by visiting [Orbit Customer Hub](#) .



Hey girls

As part of our Better Days programme, we're offering access to free period products at your local Orbit Community Hubs, as part of our new partnership with social enterprise, **Hey Girls**.

All products provided by Hey Girls are sustainable, and the social enterprise donates 100% of its profits to eliminate period poverty and increase education around period health.

As well as free period products, we're also introducing new personal care packs for customers who may struggle to afford essential toiletries such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, shower gel and shampoo. These packs are provided by another social enterprise Ethstat Ethical, who use their profits to provide food for rough sleepers, help people back into employment and support families affected by dementia.

Louise Millington, our Better Days Hub lead, commented: "Everyone has the right to access basic hygiene products, but we know the reality for some is that you may not be able to afford these everyday essentials. We want you to know that we're here to help by providing practical help to access these products at no cost whilst also offering long term support and advice through our Better Days programme."



Your views are important and we want to hear them

Changes to how we collect your feedback

Listening to your views us helps us improve our services for everyone and there are many ways you can share your feedback with us. From 7 April 2025, we started working with a new company called Qualtrics to carry out feedback surveys when we've completed services for you.

Find out more at
orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/notices 



Time to dine al fresco

Summer is on its way, what better time to try something new? Eating outdoors is not only fun, it's good for our wellbeing and connecting with nature, friends and family.

To celebrate the warmer weather, we've searched the internet and come up with our favourite new recipes for your grill or barbecue:

- **Corn on the cob:** A firm favourite on the barbecue, simple yet full of flavour with just a few ingredients
- **Halloumi burgers:** A veggie barbecue staple, easy to prepare with minimal effort
- **Barbecued sweet potatoes:** Sweet, smoky, and irresistibly tasty, these are a must on the grill—just slice, season, and let the magic happen.



You can also download our recipe pack [here](#) 🖱️

If you try any of these recipes remember to share them with us on Facebook [@Orbithousing](#) 🖱️
Happy grilling!

Don't worry if you don't have a barbecue, you can always cook these on your grill, on the hob, in your oven or air fryer! For detailed recipes, preparation tips, and more inspiration, read the our full blog [here](#) 🖱️



How to stay barbecue safe

Here are some helpful tips from the London Fire Brigade to help keep you and your home safe this summer:

- Don't ever use a barbecue on a balcony. Flames, sparks and hot embers can cause a fire and spread quickly
- Position your barbecue on level ground and keep it away from anything that may catch fire such as decking, sheds, fences or trees
- Never light a barbecue in an enclosed space and don't use accelerants
- Avoid distractions and never leave the barbecue unattended. Don't drink if you're in charge
- Keep children, pets and garden games a safe distance from the barbecue and always have a bucket of water or sand nearby for emergency use
- After cooking, let your barbecue cool and make sure it's properly out – smouldering ashes can give off dangerous carbon monoxide fumes.

For more fire safety advice, visit our [fire safety webpage](#) 🖱️



Introducing



Everyday Excellence



We have an ambition to provide among the best experience of any housing association in the country. You'll find this aim within our 2030 Strategy, and we have a plan which will help us to achieve this.



Left to right: New customer board member, Sayo Ogundayo, Orbit's Catherine Wood and Kelly Lee, Engaged Customer, Fiona Wilkinson and Orbit's Jude Cross

Everyday Excellence is the name of this plan, and it covers all the changes we are making now and over the coming years to improve your experience as an Orbit customer.

As we set out to put our plan into action, we got together with Engaged Customers to introduce them to Everyday Excellence and hear their valuable feedback on what they liked about our current services and what they think we can do differently.



We ran break-out sessions to gather customers' thoughts on key topics such as: customer resolutions (complaints), customer care, digitalising our contact methods and better understanding the data and information we need to hold about you.

Kerry Burnard, an Engaged Customer who attended the event, said: 'Meeting people in person is just brilliant, it's been helpful listening to what everyone's got to say. Loved it, really loved it. We know there's a journey and change will come, but you can see that they will change and it will be for the better, for all of us. It's really important for me to join these working groups because you can actually enjoy the end result.'

Conor Warburton, our Customer Engagement Manager, explained; "Customer input on 'how' we deliver our Everyday Excellence plan is incredibly important. This event, alongside other engagement activities, give us a direct opportunity to listen to customers who use our services and make their voices heard so that we can shape our plans and services around what they need and value most. We'll be sharing more details about Everyday Excellence in the months ahead, so watch this space."



Engaged Customer, Ian Brown, Orbit's Zoe Gould, Jacqueline Augustine, also an Engaged Customer

Want to find out more about the event? Check out our [short video](#) from the day.



The Radio Teleswitch Service is ending soon

What you need to know

Some of you have RTS electricity meters in your home to control your electric storage heaters and hot water. When RTS is switched off by your energy supplier on **30 June**, it could change how your heating works and how much you'll pay for energy.

If you have an RTS meter and haven't planned to have it changed with your electricity supplier, it's important to act now to avoid problems later.

What is RTS?

The Radio Teleswitch Service is a system that helps control when your electricity switches between day and night rates. This is typically used by people with electric storage heaters, often in flats or homes without gas.

How do I know if I have RTS?

You could have an RTS meter if:

- You use electric storage heaters for heating and hot water
- Your meter is old and not a smart meter
- Your electricity is charged at different rates during the day (e.g., Economy 7 or 10)
- There's a switch near your meter marked 'Radio Teleswitch'.

Why is it being turned off?

The technology behind RTS is outdated and will be replaced by smarter, more reliable systems. The best option is to switch to a smart meter through your energy supplier, which will offer similar benefits.

What happens if I don't switch?

If you don't replace your RTS meter before 30 June 2025, your heating or hot water won't work properly and your energy bills could increase, or you could be left without heating and hot water.

What should I do?

- Check your electricity meter for signs it could be an RTS meter. They are often labelled.
- If you have an RTS meter and haven't planned for a new meter, contact your energy supplier immediately to arrange for a smart meter installation before the deadline.

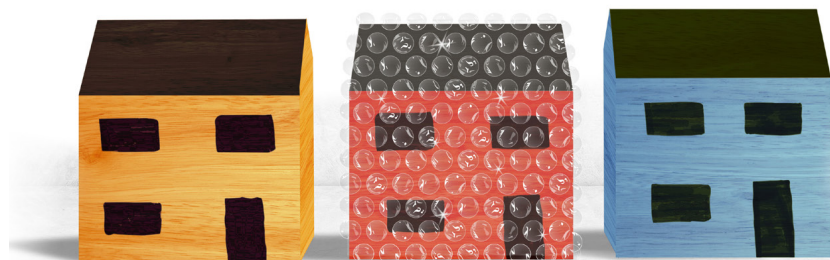


Don't wait — make sure you're prepared before 30 June 2025 to avoid any disruptions.



For more details, speak to your energy supplier or visit the [Energy UK](https://www.energy.uk) website.

Contents insurance all **wrapped up**



Insure your belongings

It's our responsibility as your housing provider to insure the structure of your home, however this doesn't include what's inside, like your furniture, clothing and personal possessions.

As our customer, you are eligible for an exclusive home contents insurance scheme, starting from just £1.98 a month for £4,000 standard cover. There's no long-term commitment and you can cancel at any time.

Having home contents insurance can't prevent floods, thefts or fires from happening, but it can help you get back on your feet.

- Pay-as-you-go
- Choice of payment methods paying monthly

Call: 01962 892086

orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/homecontentsinsurance 



Terms and conditions apply, contact above.

Price includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) charged at the appropriate rate.

The policy is underwritten by Aviva Insurance Limited. Aviva Insurance Limited, Registered in Scotland Number 2116. Registered Office: Pitheavlis, Perth PH2 0NH. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

FP.TCI.2024.60.SD

A policy holder dropped her mobile phone on the concrete and it wouldn't switch on afterwards. Her claim was settled in cash within three days of her making the claim. She said:

**"It was easier than I thought.
It was a great experience.
Thank you."**

Get in touch:

You can visit our website:
orbitcustomerhub.org.uk

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

Or to talk to us, please call: **0800 678 1221**

Textphone: **18001 0800 678 1221**

**Take a look on
social media:**

 **[@orbithousing](https://www.facebook.com/orbithousing)** 

Our postal address:
**Orbit, PO Box 6406,
Coventry, CV3 9NB**

If you need information
in a different format
please contact us on
0800 678 1221

You can raise a repair,
pay your rent, set up a
Direct Debit and much
more using
[myAccount](#) 



Orbit Group Ltd and Orbit Housing Association Ltd are registered societies under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and are exempt charities registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

