

ABBNEYFIELD UK COMPASS



ESSENTIAL NEWS FOR ABBNEYFIELD UK RESIDENTS

JULY 2008 ■ ISSUE 5

HOUSING TEAM UPDATE

As part of the review of Abbeyfield UK's Housing service provision we have recently completed a restructure of the day to day management of the Housing Services Department.

Our new structure will ensure that our services are focused on local houses and on the residents who live in them.

We also want to ensure that decision-making, backed up by effective budget management, takes place at a more local level, and that we strengthen the relationships between local staff and those who are based at our Head Office in St Albans.

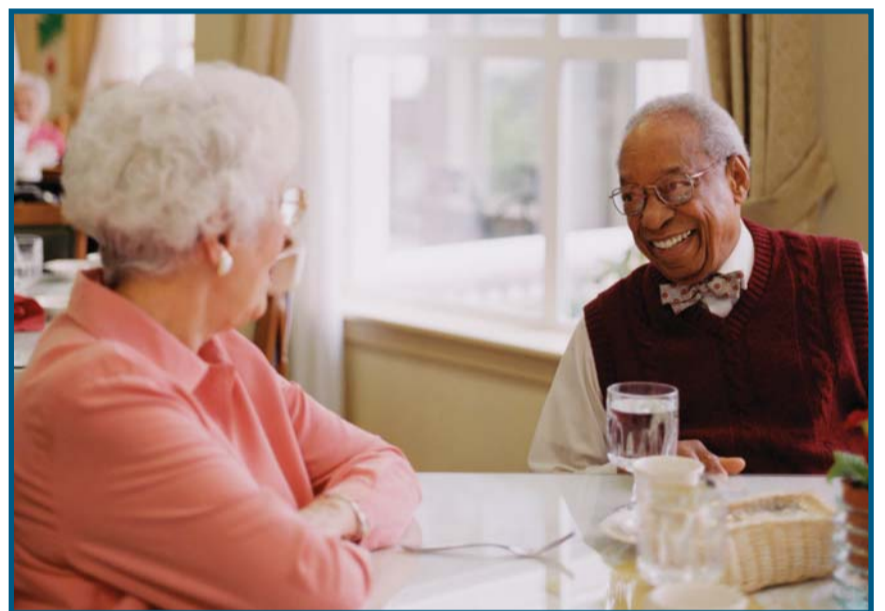
This new way of working came into force on July 3. It now means we have six regions:

- North West
- North Eastern and East Midlands
- West Midlands

- Eastern
- South East
- South West

Every region will be headed by a Regional Head of Housing and Resident Services. House managers will also get extra support from a Regional Finance and Performance Officer and a Housing and Resident Services Officer. In addition to this, each region will have a Regional Allocations Manager who will be responsible for promoting our houses and services within the local area ensuring that we continue to find new residents and that our houses are full.

Over the coming weeks we will be welcoming some new faces to Abbeyfield and are delighted to



confirm that a number of existing staff will be taking on new roles within the new structure.

There are still a number of vacancies and we are hoping to fill these posts in the next few weeks - in the meantime we have arranged cover to ensure that you continue to receive good levels of support.

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WELCOME TO THE FOLD

REGIONAL HEAD OF HOUSING AND RESIDENT SERVICES

PAUL CHAMBERS



The first of our new faces is Paul Chambers who will take the position of Regional Head of Housing and Resident Services in the North East

and East Midlands Region. Paul has worked in social housing since leaving school and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Paul started working life as a Trainee Housing Manager with Leeds City Council before moving to what was then the Sutton Dwellings Trust as Assistant to the Northern Regional Manager based in York. From there he was appointed as an Estate Manager with Kingston upon Hull City Council

and, following a number of appointments within the Housing Department, held the position of Assistant Director of Housing for eight years. He had, amongst other functions, responsibility for sheltered housing and caretaking services within the city.

In 1990 Paul was appointed as Director of Housing with South Derbyshire District Council where he worked for eight years. For the past ten years he has been working as a freelance housing management consultant and trainer. During this time he's worked with registered social landlords, local authorities, tenants' groups and almshouse charity organisations. Paul has also tutored for the National Certificate in Sheltered and Supported Housing and acted as an advisor and

assessor for the Code of Practice in Sheltered and Supported Housing.

Paul lives with his wife and dog, Shandy, in a small village on the Yorkshire Wolds and is an enthusiastic (but not very good) golfer.

Paul said: "During my first week with Abbeyfield UK I have visited a number of houses within the region and have been impressed by the variety of buildings, some of which I would describe, by appearance, as quite grand - others are more homely, but all had a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. The dedication of the house staff and volunteers that I met and their commitment to the residents and Abbeyfield UK also impressed me. I am looking forward to my second week and visiting more houses in the region."

HOUSING AND RESIDENT SERVICES OFFICER

MARGARET PARKER



Margaret has worked for Abbeyfield for over twelve years, initially working two hours a day as an Administrator for her local

Abbeyfield Society, then recently full time as Regional Administrator.

She took up the role of Housing and Resident Services Officer for Merseyside in early July.

Margaret said: "I am pleased to have

retained close contact with the residents on Merseyside as over the years I have built up a good relationship with them, seeing some of them move to Abbeyfield in their early 80s and still living here in their 90s and even over 100.

"I have watched them grow in their time in Abbeyfield from being very quiet and nervous at the prospect of communal living to being very confident and strong and active members of their houses."

Margaret lives in Maghull with her

husband, two children and 14 year old West Highland White, Bonnie, the most important member of the family.

Margaret's hobbies include visiting the theatre on a regular basis, reading, spending time with family and friends, and chaperoning children working in the entertainment business.

This last hobby has enabled her to meet a number of people, including Paul O'Grady, Julie Goodyear, Brian Blessed, Julian Clary, Brian Connelly and many others.

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER

DON ECCLESTON



We caught up with Don to ask what his priorities will be for the first six months.

Don's relishing the challenges of his

new post - the overall objective of which is to play an essential role in the team tasked with ensuring the sound financial management of the houses in the West Midlands Region.

Some of Don's specific challenges will be to meet exacting deadlines for such things as salary details to the payroll department, month-end returns to the finance office, performance returns, etc.

Don's had quite a varied history, having worked in design and development, training and human resources, accounts, quality systems specialist and of course administration for Abbeyfield.

Don's many interests include theatre, cinema, music (in particular jazz), reading (spy novels, histories and Terry Pratchett humorous novels), photography and designing and building elaborate kites. Over the last 10 or 15 years he has been lucky enough to have been invited to many countries around the world to demonstrate the art of the western kite - including five visits to Colombia in South America.

New Regions for the Housing Services Department



REGIONAL ALLOCATIONS MANAGER

RACHEL BURNETT



Rachel Burnett is our Regional Allocations Manager in the South West.

Rachel has worked with Abbeyfield UK for almost 18

months. Prior to this she worked in supported housing with Young Devon for three years. She also has 12 years' experience with North Devon District Council's housing department.

Rachel's office base will be at our house in Lynton in North Devon and she will be promoting 35 houses across the South West Region.

Thanks to Rachel's recent efforts, the houses in Barnstaple and Lynton are now full and a recent open day and local promotion in the West Midlands area has meant that we are welcoming another three residents to the Hagley house. Rachel is currently working with staff and volunteers to promote

the services on offer at our house in Portishead, Somerset where there are currently a number of empty rooms.

Rachel said: "I'm really looking forward to engaging with lots of different groups across the region - and meeting staff, volunteers and external groups such as local authorities and other charities. We're going to spread the message and show everyone what we offer to Abbeyfield residents!"

MEET THE BOARD - DAVID POWELL



Spain, USA, Middle East and Africa are just some of the places David Powell has gained inspiration

from to help Abbeyfield UK in his role as Chairman.

David, who has a degree in business finance and law, has had a varied career including a number of roles in industry and banking specialising in finance. He has also established his own healthcare company from scratch, under the banner of Bourne Care Group, and started up a new venture for the

residential care of young people with learning disabilities especially autism (Verve Life). At the end of 2003 he concentrated his business on the provision of care for the young.

David said: "I joined Abbeyfield in 2004 as I felt I could use some of my experiences in care and finance to help Abbeyfield grow and develop for the future. The ethos of Abbeyfield is close to my heart and our older citizens deserve the respect and dignity that as a developed nation we seem less willing to give. Abbeyfield has a tremendous asset in the generosity of so many people giving up their time to further

the care of the elderly and this must be built upon. We have a great wealth of resources in volunteers, staff and funding which must be used wisely to ensure Abbeyfield is still meeting this valuable need well into the future."

As well as his volunteer board role at Abbeyfield UK, David is involved in a number of local and international charities and is a mentor for the Prince's Trust.

A father of two, he also manages to squeeze in time to play golf and squash (with his daughter), jog, sail and collect classic cars.

BON VOYAGE MARGARET



People are at the heart of Abbeyfield - whether residents, staff or volunteers, so we are all sorry to see Margaret

Godfrey, one of our long serving members of staff leave Abbeyfield this month to take retirement.

Margaret joined Abbeyfield in 1995 as a care assistant working at Sycamore House, a newly built care home in Nottingham. With the support and encouragement of Brenda Kenyon, who was the House Chairman at the time, Margaret quickly worked her way up to Senior Care Assistant, then to Deputy Manager and became the Care Home Manager in 1997.

Sycamore House, which merged with Abbeyfield UK in 2005, is a wonderful example of a high quality registered care home. Under Margaret's skilful management and guidance Sycamore House has been awarded a 3* Excellent rating from the Commission for Social Care Inspection, the highest rating possible.

Interestingly, Margaret only intended to work for a couple of years when she first joined Abbeyfield. However, with Brenda's support and encouragement she worked her way up and found herself doing a job that she loved and never dreamed she could do.

When asked about her time at Abbeyfield Margaret said: "I just thought I would give it my best but somehow others saw in me more than I

could see in myself and for that I will always be grateful. I owe a lot to Brenda and to Abbeyfield for the encouragement they have given me. I have really enjoyed my time with Abbeyfield and I shall miss Sycamore House very much."

Margaret plans to spend a year in Australia with her son, who already lives there, and her daughter who is moving to Australia with her family at the end of July. Margaret and her husband will be setting off for Australia at the end of August, stopping in Thailand on the way for some sightseeing.

Margaret will be greatly missed by Abbeyfield, and especially by the residents and staff at Sycamore House. We all wish her well for a long and happy retirement.

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Abbeyfield
Where older people find care in housing