



FORUM HOUSING
— it's all about **you** —

Shout

Celebrating 40 years of supporting young
people in Merseyside

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40

Forum Housing Association's
40th YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Systems Thinking

During last year we started to explore a new concept to us as an organisation. It started with the reading of a book, these things often do! It was by a man called John Seddon and the title of the book was 'Freedom from Command and Control'. It's not the easiest read but the subject is fascinating. Almost everything we do in life has some system or process to it. We only have to think about going shopping, filling the car with petrol, going on holiday, changing schools, hosting an event, inviting people for a meal. The list is endless. There is planning and process and organising for everything in the workplace. Especially as we need to have plans in order to measure ourselves against them to see if we achieved what we set out to do. It's a great feeling looking back over a Business Plan and seeing all that has been achieved.

Anyway to come back to Command and Control and Systems Thinking... We have introduced this now within the Association and we expect it will make us much better

about making the work work and in our thinking about it. It's a lifestyle change. We will no longer be stuck in doing things the way we did and adding in extra processes and systems, just in case someone or something goes wrong. There is a link here to our risk management processes which are now about maximising opportunities not minimising risks.

Systems Thinking is not a management tool or a quick fix nor is it a cost cutting exercise or one person knows it all and has the answer.

It is thinking differently about work and it has had a radical impact upon us. We recognise at Forum Housing Association our interdependence, our need for each other, we exhibit behaviours that emphasise every one is valuable. We work together to meet our young people and other stakeholder needs. We are other people focussed not self focussed. It's because of all this we're looking at our systems and processes to bring about 'less is more' and

so that we don't spend our time on systems and processes but on people.

It's about what matters to us as an organisation, its work, related to our purpose. It's not top down, hierarchical (which we are not!) or functional and its definitely not about Control. It's about co-operation and liberation to think and to work in all job roles and functions.

Most of all for us as an organisation, its about our continual learning. This is something we pride ourselves on. It we are to be an organisation which is a force for good we have to be and indeed we are continually learning.

Systems Thinking is just the latest in a long line of corporate learning and we will be a better organisation for it.

Chris Allen
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



We Passed!

Forum recently held its annual stakeholders event at Mitchell Motors in Cheshire Oaks, a superb venue normally associated with all things mechanical.

This unique event used the guise of a self imposed M.O.T test, to allow those we work closely with to tell us what they think of us as an organisation. Would we pass, fail or need a bit of advice?

The evening saw many people come together from different organisations and departments to tackle a number of 'key' challenges. Activities helped guests form opinions about Forum, its strengths and opportunities and whether Forum were fit and roadworthy for the journey ahead.

Mark Mitchell, proprietor, announced the result at the end of the evening to an expectant audience. *'Forum Housing Association have passed their M.O.T. to mark their 40th anniversary'*.

Host of the event The Bishop of Birkenhead concluded the evening by expressing that Forum *'are determined to explore new ways of working, improving its performance and ensuring that young people remain our highest and most precious resource. It is improving their lives that brings us here tonight.'*

The end of the evening, but the start of the journey ahead.



Don't forget to "Get Plugged In"

Celebration Service

Oh what a night! Over 200 people joined Forum Housing Association at their Celebration Service at St. Catherine's Church, Tranmere, as they continue their 40th Anniversary celebrations in style.

Young people from across the region have been having their lives rebuilt for 40 years by Forum Housing Association and as part of the celebrations Forum held a very special, bespoke service.

The Association works across Wirral, Southport, Sefton and Ellesmere Port providing young people aged 16-25 years with not just a home, but an opportunity for them to realise their potential through a range of innovative training and mentoring initiatives. Around 600 young people are supported every year.

The guest list was littered with residents, staff, partners, and friends, and attended by the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress, Counsellor Andrew and Mrs Hodson, and by the High

Sheriff of Merseyside Mrs Judith Greensmith who said the event 'was inspiring'. Everyone sang praises, gave thanks, watched amazing images and many said they were truly humbled by the simple, yet oh so beautiful service of worship and thanksgiving.

The service was introduced by Darren Moore, the vicar at St. Catherine's, and included a powerful, heartfelt message of hope and forgiveness from The Bishop of Birkenhead, the Right Reverend Bishop Keith Sinclair.

The service was a wonderful occasion in which Forum Housing Association celebrated their Christian foundation and ethos which have been the driving force behind the past forty years in bringing the Christian message of love and hope to broken young people right in our midst. Mr Chris Drake, Chair of Forum Housing Association, said of the service, 'In holding a Celebration Service as part of the Association's 40th Anniversary we are reminded that Forum was

founded by a small group of local Christians who wanted to show their faith in action by way of making a difference - in this instance, to the lives of homeless young people. Continuing with this ethos and commitment to young people, no celebration would be complete without us having come together to worship and acknowledge God for all that He has done over the last 40 years and for our dependence on Him for the future.'

The creativity and dedication of the staff was evident throughout the evening, as the church exploded with an array of colour and music.

Overall, the Celebration Service was a triumphal success!

Anyone wishing to find out more about the innovative work and engagement the Association has with its residents or about other events this year can find them on www.forumhousing.co.uk



Giving residents a Voice!

The Resident Rep Team are a very important part of the Association. We started off in 2003 at a very basic level of resident meetings and focus groups and this has been developed over the years to meet the ever changing needs of our young people.

After being housed and supported by the Association, the Resident Rep

Team have gone on to be employed by the Association and to represent the voice of young people using positive peer language, behaviour and attitudes. As the Association has grown bigger and bigger, so has the team.....

We are a team of four and our role is to ensure that young people have a variety of opportunities to engage, have their say and are offered information

and given openings to better themselves as an individual and citizen. We also initiate and offer opportunities to our young people from an international as well as national and local perspective.

This also includes educating our peers about their rights and responsibilities, not only within their home but within their community.



Barnstondale Residential

The Residents Reps Team has supported projects in their 4th set of Project Elections and the response was our best yet.

We have 15 Project Reps in place, in their role the majority have all held a Project Meeting and 7 attended Safeguarding Training facilitated by a member of the Energy Team.

Following that 7 of the Project Reps including one mum to be went to Barnstondale Activity Centre to get involved in loads of sport, fun and games and even completed some elements of Neuro Linguistic Programming Training and Team Building, the group bonded extremely well and where an asset to our Association.

We had some excellent feedback and one of the most productive parts of the trip was Chris Allen our Chief Executive gave a short talk on the importance of Project Reps and how they have a direct link to her through the Resident Rep Team.

The group done extremely well and we are looking forward to a great 6 months of being proactive and having fun!!!



Don't forget to "Get Plugged In"

De Bridge Heads !

This is the name our residents chose to call themselves when they applied for money from the Youth Opportunity Panel we could apply for £10,000 as we were a project.

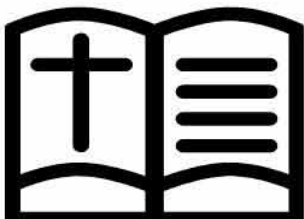
Floating support asked a group of residents what would they like to change if they had the money they all agreed the kitchen and bathrooms could do with a makover , they had to get estimates for all the items that they needed and put the bid together.

The Panel agreed to give the Bridge £12.450,
All the residents were so excited and the planning commenced.

As this was our first bid and we made some financial mistakes which we have learned from, we did not account for all the sundries that were needed to support the work, FORUM paid for these when in effect it should have been calculated in with the bid.

The work began residents helped wherever they could the kitchen is now complete and everyone is enjoying it, the residents asked if they could have a camera put in the kitchen, this was not to check for vandalism it was to see who was not washing their dishes.

The bathrooms are currently being done and we will keep you informed of progress



**Prayer
Request**

- All the Board Members, Staff and Young People
- Continued Financial Provision
- Our 40th Anniversary Events – in particular support and impact
- Inspiration and creativity in order to continue to support young people in an innovative and relevant way
- For relationships to continue to be built within the local and wider communities



www.forumhousing.co.uk



How can you help ?

Gift Aid

Have you ever wondered how you can help the Association on a more regular basis? We have a Gift Aid scheme. The scheme will allow people to make regular Standing Order payments to the Association and if they pay Income Tax we will also be able to make this giving more effective through reclaiming tax.

The revenue raised through this scheme will only be used to enable young people to undertake personal development activities and for us to make welfare payments to young people in acute need. Many of the activities we have let you know about in previous additions of SHOUT have only been able to happen because of additional funding.

If you have a desire to help homeless young people from your local area in a safe and constructive way, then we would suggest this is an ideal method. Every single penny of giving will be directed to young people in a safe, accountable and purposeful manner.

If you would like to Gift Aid any past or previous Donation please click below for our Gift Aid Form (Gift Aid presently adds 28% to the value of your donation with no obligation to you).

Please contact Mike Pooley on
0151 649-9718
for more information.



Shoe Box Appeal

Every year the Association, with help from its friends, gives every young person attached to the Association a gift on Christmas Day. For some of our residents, it's the only present they get so you can imagine how appreciated they are.

Last year 301 young people received a shoebox filled with numerous gifts. To achieve this target this year we need your support and kind donations.

How can you help?

We would really appreciate it if you could help us by donating items that we can put in the shoeboxes or even take the time to fill a box yourself.

Please wrap the lid and box separately and secure with a rubber band or use a Christmas stocking or large gift bag. If you are unable to make up a shoebox but could donate some of the contents that would be a tremendous help to us.

Annual Auction

Following on from last year's successful event the Association held its 2nd Charity Auction on Thursday, 3rd July at the Kings Gap Hotel in Hoylake. The event was held to raise funds directly for young people, to support their aspirations and to develop their progress towards independent living.

If you wish to support us you could always donate an auction prize for the evening or an independent amount of money as a general sponsor to help offset the costs of the evening. Any of these would be gratefully received.

Harvest Festival Donations

All Harvest Festival donations are put to good use throughout the Association's projects and play a vital part in the support we offer young people.

On arrival most young people come to the Association with little in the way of food, especially within our direct access units. The harvest festival donations are used to support these young people until they can sort out their circumstances.

From an education prospective to a basic need for food, your donations play a major role in the every day life of the Association.

Don't forget to "Get Plugged In"

Diary Dates

NEXT EVENT

This year the Association will be 40 years old! To celebrate this amazing achievement we are organising an event every month and hope you would like to support and celebrate with us.

If you are interested in attending any of the events please contact us on **0151 649 9718**.

Black Tie and Rubies' Ball

What year of celebration would be complete without a party? It wouldn't! Join us on this very auspicious, and oh so very grand evening of glitz, glamour and fundraising.

The Event is being held on **Thursday 25th June**
Please contact Head Office on 0151 649 9718 for ticket information.

Beach Event

Sea, sun (hopefully!), sand and bags of laughs are guaranteed! Exercise your competitive edge and enter the sand castle building competition

Held on **Sunday 26th July** at Harrison Drive, New Brighton Beach.

Get Plugged In!

Would you like to receive regular news bulletins and event invitations from Forum Housing Association via e-mail?

If you decide to "Get Plugged In" to the Association we will send you a quarterly newsletter via e-mail and invitations to the numerous events we hold throughout the year.

Don't forget it's our 40th year anniversary this year and we have plenty of events planned, we would love you to celebrate with us.

Email us on
getpluggedin@forumhousing.co.uk



www.forumhousing.co.uk

