

Tenant Topics

Newsletter for Two Rivers
Housing Tenants

Jubilant Jubilee!



The sun was shining, and celebrations were in full swing across the Forest of Dean to congratulate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her Platinum Jubilee.

Many of our HomePlus tenants got involved in the celebrations too. They created wonderful decorative displays, baked and of course, ate cakes and got together with friends, family, and neighbours.

Turn to page two to see more photos from events across our communities.

See more
photos on
page two

The Parkside Knitting Club, created this wonderful jubilee themed bunting to decorate the communal space for the Queen's Jubilee.



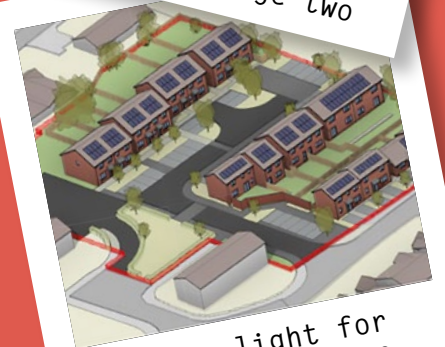
See
back page for
your chance
to win a
£15 voucher!



In this issue...



Tufthorn tenants raise
money for Ukraine
refugees - Page two



Green light for
Johnstone Close
redevelopment - Page four



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Page seven


tworivers
HOUSING



Supporting our communities

Celebrations were held across our HomePlus centres including St Barts in Newent.



Jubilant Jubilee!

The Parkside Knitting Club even sent some bunting across for our Chief Executive Garry King!



Two Rivers Housing tenant Adele Garner, planted a Rowan Tree in Rowandean as part of the Queen's Green Canopy replacing the last Rowan Tree in the area that recently came down in a storm.



Easter celebrations at Parkside

Our Neighbourhood Housing Advisor Clive, was asked to pick the winner of the Easter Bonnett competition at a tenant-run event in our communal centre at Parkside – tough decision we think you'll agree!



We provided these special celebration cakes to mark the occasion at our HomePlus Schemes.

Tufthorn tenants raise money for Ukraine refugees

Tenants at Tufthorn Close used their usual Monday morning Bingo session to raise money for those fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Alongside the usual tea and biscuits, players donated prizes for a raffle, which raised a fantastic £70. This has been passed on to the Forest of Dean Lions Appeal and will be used to help support Ukrainian refugees. The group received a lovely letter from the appeal's Secretary thanking them for their donation, which will be used to support refugees in Poland and Romania.



If you'd like to donate to the Forest of Dean Lions Appeal, you can do so on its website: www.forestlions.org.uk

We know that some tenants may want to offer their homes to help those affected by the war in the Ukraine, find out more on page four of this edition of Tenant Topics.

Repairs update



Our repairs team is working hard to reduce the backlog of repairs. Between 1 January and 31 March 2022, we received more than 3,366 new repair requests from tenants and completed 2,947.

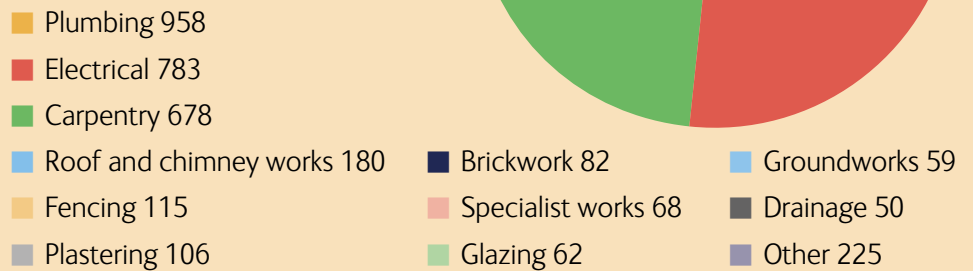
As you can see, the number of jobs raised was higher than the number of jobs completed.

We are continuing with our recruitment drive to bring in more operatives to help manage the workload and looking at other ways to help manage the volume of repairs work we are receiving.

Repairs in numbers – January to March 2022:

3,366 new jobs raised
2,947 repairs completed

Jobs raised by type:



Electrical services checks

Over the next few months, we will be contacting almost 480 tenants to arrange electrical safety inspections. These include:

- Five-year electrical safety checks
- Smoke and Carbon Dioxide detector servicing
- Alarm checks in communal or shared spaces



These electrical services are a legal requirement, and you must allow us access to your home to complete them. To help us manage this large volume of work, please make sure you are home for your appointment.

If you need to cancel your appointment, please contact our team by calling **0800 316 0897** as soon as possible.



Welcome home!

In the first three months of the year, we helped **88** families find a warm, safe, affordable home!

Including **29** that moved into one of our HomePlus schemes

We also helped **8** families complete mutual exchanges into more suitable properties.

Green light for Johnstone Close redevelopment

Two Rivers Housing has received planning permission to redevelop its supported living site at Johnstone Close in Staunton. Following a lengthy consultation with tenants at the site, we submitted planning to

demolish the existing property and build 20 new homes.

The site will include a mixture of tenures and house types to suit local need. The plans were approved at a meeting on 10 May 2022.



More affordable homes in Gloucestershire

We are committed to increasing the number of affordable homes available to families across Gloucestershire and the surrounding area. Four years ago, we pledged to build 1,000 new homes by 2028 and we are well on our way to achieving this.

Between January and March 2022, we took handover of

24 new affordable homes

In the year ending 31 March 2022, we began construction on

225 new homes

We also had three schemes awaiting planning approval, which would help us deliver another 68 new homes in the Forest of Dean and Gloucestershire.

Star tip

Cook a bit more in the evening and save some for tomorrow's lunch. Even better – freeze it and when money's tighter you have meals on hand.



Homes for Ukraine

We understand that some of our tenants would like to offer their spare rooms to provide accommodation for Ukrainian refugees. We fully support this scheme and, wherever possible, will work with those who may wish to offer up an unoccupied spare bedroom to those fleeing the war.

The government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme supports people who can offer a spare room, or separate self-contained accommodation to Ukrainian refugees for at least six months.

If you're planning to be a Homes for Ukraine host, you will need to let us

know so that we can make sure this will be possible. You'll find more information on our website and the form you need to complete to let us know you are applying to the scheme: www.tworivershousing.org.uk/homes-for-ukraine

Tackling anti-social behaviour



Fun in the sun - without upsetting the neighbours!

In the summer months, we often see an increase in complaints related to fun in the sun, but there are some simple actions you can take to ensure that you and your neighbours can enjoy the great outdoors.

How does your garden grow? With the combination of sunshine and rain, grass, hedges, and bushes can grow quickly. Make sure you trim these back regularly, so they don't overhang your neighbours garden or obstruct paths that others need to use and dispose of the cuttings and clippings properly.

Park politely. If you are having people over, make sure they park considerately and don't block other people's driveways or vehicles in. They may need to park a little bit away from your home, but the short walk will help them burn off the burgers!

Be BBQ mindful. Apart from making your neighbours hungry, smoke from BBQs and firepits can leave the neighbour's clean washing smelling like the local kebab house. Smoke can also get into people's homes and cause breathing issues for those with asthma or other lung conditions. If you are planning a BBQ, let the neighbours know.

It's not so quiet! Noise is one of the biggest areas of complaint for our neighbourhood teams. With more people in your home, kids running around and drinks flowing, things can get loud – keep the volume at a reasonable level where you can talk without shouting especially after 11pm.

Look after your guests. We all have a friend who tends to go a little bit too far when they've had a few drinks. If you are having people over, make sure their behaviour doesn't impact those that live around you.

The great clean-up. Having people round for food and drinks can create a lot of rubbish. It is important that this is cleaned up properly to avoid it blowing into other people's gardens or attracting pests. Be prepared, get your bins ready so people can put their rubbish in them throughout the day – it will also save you the hassle of chasing cups around the garden the next day.

Everyone has the right to enjoy their garden and the shared space around their home. Remember, be considerate and talk to your neighbours before the event – that way everyone can enjoy the summer.

COMPETITION

Is your garden 'blooming' brilliant?



Enter our Two Rivers Housing in Bloom, garden competition and you could win a £50 voucher.

We are looking for the best blooming gardens in our homes! If you are proud of your patch, growing your own veggies or hanging baskets of blooms, we want to see them.

Entry is open from the 1 July 2022 and will close on 10 September 2022 and there are three categories, to choose from:



Best Garden – Does your garden have the 'wow' factor? Judges will be looking for a variety of plants in different colours and shapes, and ornaments used to good effect.

Best tubs, pots and baskets – Even in the smallest outdoor space, we want to see the creative ways you have been growing.

Best Edible Garden – We want to see a variety of vegetables, herbs and fruits.

The closing date for entries is 10 September 2022 and is open to all Two Rivers Housing tenants.

For more information, including how to enter, visit our website or contact our community engagement team on 0800 316 0897 or by email: communityengagement@2rh.org.uk



STAR results for 2021/2022

Every year, we contact hundreds of tenants to ask them for feedback on our services. We do this using an independent research agency, who contact around 250 tenants three times a year and ask them questions aligned to Housemark's STAR methodology.

STAR is a series of questions developed with tenants and housing providers used across the housing sector to provide feedback from tenants. This helps us review how we are performing against other similar organisations and drives changes to improve the service we provide to our tenants.

We monitor these and share the results with our tenants and colleagues across the year. Our full year results for 2021/2022 and a comparison for the previous year were:

CORE STAR INDICATOR	Previous year's results	This year's results
Overall satisfaction	86%	84%
Quality of home	83%	83%
Safe and secure home	90%	92%
Easy to deal with	85%	85%

While our overall satisfaction score reduced by 2% compared to last year, this is broadly inline with the housing sector in general and is likely a result of significant repairs backlogs and disruption to other services as we continue to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

Alongside feedback on repairs, the most frequent theme identified by tenants who are dissatisfied was around communication issues. This included not being able to speak to the right person, the time taken to get back to them and providing updates or information proactively.

We were pleased to see an increase in the number of tenants that feel safe and secure in their homes and that our scores remained consistent with our 2020/2021 scores for the quality of our homes and being easy to deal with.

We are looking at what we can do to improve our scores going forward. This includes reducing our repairs backlog, reviewing our customer approach, and using feedback from our tenants to help make changes to the way we do things. We are also developing a new customer engagement framework to ensure tenants are able to directly scrutinize and influence how we deliver our services.

If you'd like to get involved in helping to shape your housing association, please contact our community engagement team communityengagement@2rh.org.uk.

How are we doing?

Each year, we set a number of objectives and measures that will help us continue to provide warm, safe, affordable homes to those that need them. These help us understand what's going well and the areas that we need to look at and improve.

As you can see from the graphic on this page, we achieved six of our key measurements during 2021/2022 and came close on one other. Our target for overall tenant satisfaction came in at 84% and how satisfied tenants are with the quality of their homes was 83%. Although these are below where we want them to be, it reflects the very challenging circumstances of the past two years.










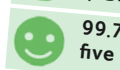

We know that the backlog of repair work is having an impact on both of these scores and are working hard to reduce this over the coming months.

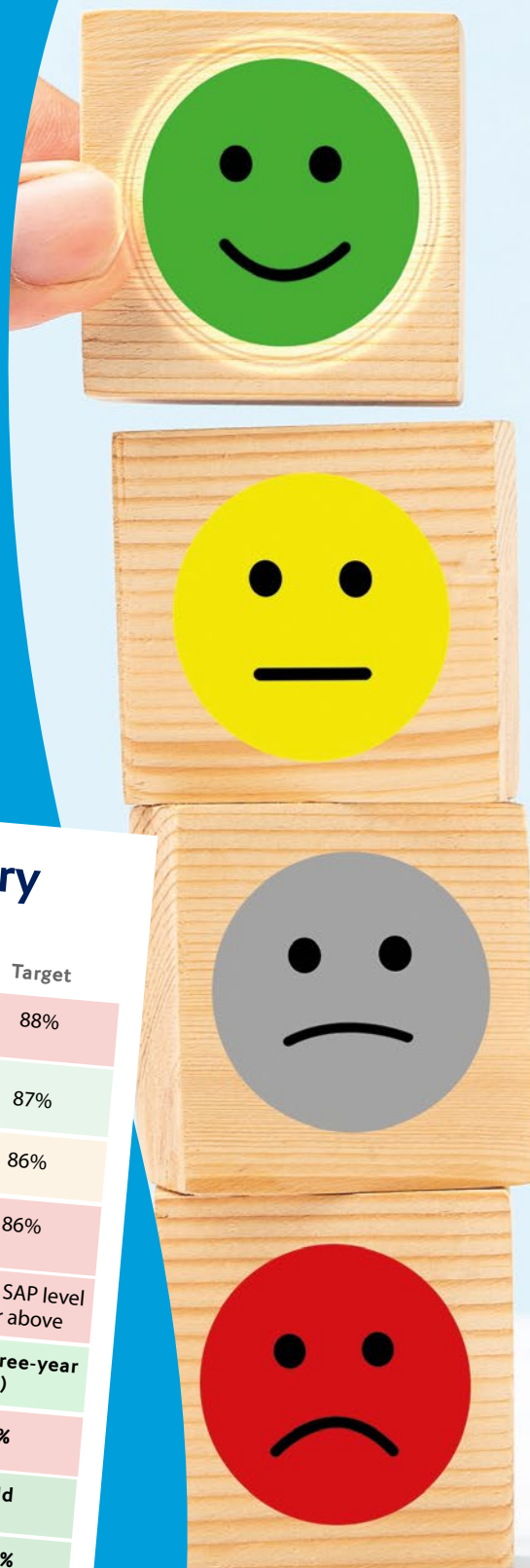
We also just missed our target to make sure that all our homes have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of Band D or above. We will continue to work on this as part of our journey to becoming net-zero carbon by 2050. To support this, we started our first ever decarbonisation project in 2021. Working in partnership to obtain some grant support from government, the demonstrator project will help us plan the best way to take this work forward over the coming years.

The national trend towards colleagues moving jobs and changing lifestyles impacted our organisation and we saw an increase in the number of colleagues who left us during the year. This has caused some disruption to our organisation and inevitably impacted on service levels, but we are not alone, and many other housing associations have seen a higher number of colleagues leave than normal.

We are currently reviewing a number of things to help us attract and retain the very best people, so we can continue to strengthen and improve the service we provide to our tenants.

We are in the process of agreeing and setting our objectives for 2022/2023. These will be shared on our website in the next few weeks.

Performance Summary		
Year end 2021-2022		
2021/2022 achievement		
	84% of customers are satisfied with Two Rivers Housing overall	Target 88%
	92% feel safe and secure in their home	87%
	85% of tenants find us easy to deal with	86%
	83% of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their home	86%
	94% of our homes have a SAP Level D or above	100% SAP level D or above
	We have built 84 new homes (118 across three-year average)	100 (three-year average)
	21% Voluntary staff leavers	8%
	Retained Investors in People Gold accreditation	Gold
	Achieved an operating margin of 40.6% (EBITDA MRI)	31.6%
	99.7% landlord compliance across the five areas	100%
	Achieved G1/V2 Regulatory judgement (G/V)	G1/V1





Health & Safety in our homes

Fire prevention in your home

As an ex-firefighter in the Royal Air Force, fire prevention is a subject close to the heart of our Health and Safety Business Partner Jonny. Here he shares his best advice for reducing the risk of fire in your home.

Smoke alarms

All of our properties are fitted with smoke alarms. You should test these every month and if they are not working report this to our contact centre team immediately. We also check them as part of our landlord compliance activity.

In the kitchen

The most obvious source fire in the kitchen comes from cooking. Make sure you take sensible precautions including:

- Keeping loose clothing, tea towels and clothes away from heat sources.
- Using the spark devices on gas cookers rather than a match or lighter.
- Avoiding cooking while under the influence of alcohol.
- Don't leave children unattended while things are cooking.
- Double check the oven is off when your done.

If you have a deep fat fryer, make sure the food is dry before you put it inside to avoid the oil splashing. If the oil starts to smoke, it's too hot – turn the fryer off and leave it to cool.

NEVER throw water on a fryer that has caught fire.

Electrical safety

Electrical appliances can overheat and cause fires in your home. To help reduce the risk of fire from an electrical appliance, follow this guidance:

- Make sure your appliance has a British or European safety mark on it when you buy it.
- Make sure high-powered appliances such as washing machines have a single plug to themselves.
- Don't overload plug sockets.
- When charging electrical goods, follow the manufacturer's instructions and look for the CE mark that indicate the charger complies with European Safety Standards.
- Make sure you are home when we call to do electrical inspections – this is a legal requirement. You must allow our operatives into your home to do the work.

Furniture

Many house fires start with furniture that has been exposed to a heat source. When you are buying furniture and furnishings always make sure it has the 'fire-resistant' permanent label.

- Keep heat sources, including portable heaters, open fires and candles away from furniture and other flammable items such as curtains and clothes.

Cigarettes

Put them out. Right out!

- Never smoke in bed.
- Use a proper ashtray – never a wastepaper bin.
- Don't leave a lit cigarette, cigar, or pipe unattended.
- Take extra care if you smoke when you're tired, taking prescription medication or if you have been drinking.
- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.

If you would like further help to prevent fires starting in your home, you can book a **FREE Safe and Well** visit with the local fire brigade. Visit their website to arrange a visit: www.glosfire.gov.uk/forms/Newhomesafety.asp

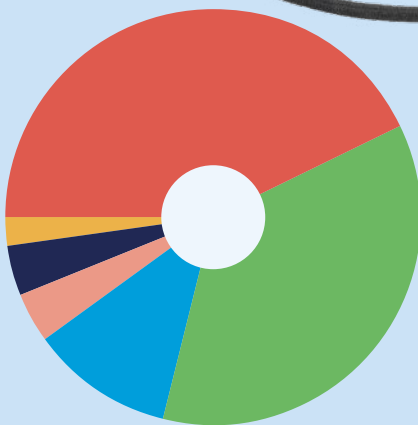
Handling complaints

47

new complaints
logged

Your feedback, good and bad, is important to us. We use it to identify areas for improvement and help our team understand how they can provide better service to all our tenants.

We saw a small increase in the number of complaints received in the last quarter of the year and 80% of these were related to repairs and maintenance issues. We also received one complaint which has been escalated to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) and we are currently awaiting its decision.



You can find more details of the complaints we received between January and March 2022 below.

Complaints by service area:

- 43% maintenance
- 36% repairs
- 11% neighbourhood housing
- 4% homeownership
- 4% development
- 2% lettings

Most common types of complaint

- 25% quality of work
- 11% time taken
- 19% lack of contact
- 11% damp and mould issues
- 9% missed appointments

About the Housing Ombudsman Service

We work hard to resolve issues raised by our tenants as quickly and effectively as possible and work in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.

You can raise a complaint with us in person, by telephone, by email and on our website and we will do everything we can to put things right.

All tenants have the option to raise complaints with the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) at any time. They offer a free, independent and impartial service to tenants and can provide dispute support and dispute resolution.

You can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service on its website, by email, by telephone or by post.

W: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

E: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

T: 0300 111 3000

P: Housing Ombudsman Service,
PO Box 152, Liverpool,
L33 7WQ

Star tip

You will find our complaints procedure on our website in the literature library



Keeping our homes safe

All landlords have a duty to make sure their homes are safe. This includes regularly servicing and checking heating systems, managing fire risks, and carrying out inspections. These are a legal requirement, and **you must let us in your home to complete these checks.**

Between January and March 2022, our planned maintenance team carried out:

So far this year, we've also completed

21 legionella risk assessments, and

32 emergency lighting upgrades at our properties

790 gas services
126 solid fuel services
110 electrical inspections
8 lift services



Please park politely on our estates

We know that finding parking near your home is important, but please park considerately in our estates. As a car owner, it is your responsibility to park properly and in line with the highway code. You should:

✓ Use of street parking or marked parking bays wherever possible.

If you do have to stop on the side of the road, you should:

✓ Park facing the same way traffic flows.

✓ Stop as close to the kerbside as possible.

✓ Leave extra space for vehicles displaying a blue badge.

✓ Switch off the engine, headlights and fog lights.

Do not:

✗ Stop near a school entrance.

✗ Park in a way that would obstruct an emergency vehicle from getting through.

✗ Obstruct lowered kerbs designed to help wheelchair or mobility scooter users.

✗ Park opposite or within 10 metres of a junction.

✗ Obstruct pathways.



News in short

Regulator conducts In Depth Assessment

In June 2022, the Regulator of Social Housing conducted its latest In Depth Assessment (IDA) of Two Rivers Housing. Members of the Board and our leadership team met with the Regulator, who asked a wide range of questions about the organisation, its finances and how it is run.

This is a regular occurrence, which is undertaken for every housing association or registered provider every four years. We will get the results of our IDA in July.

It's gold – again!

In April 2022, Two Rivers Housing was awarded the RoSPA Gold Medal for health and safety practice for the ninth year in a row. The award is internationally recognised and given to those who continually demonstrate best practice in health and safety management.



Worcester Road centre gets revamp

Our community centre in Worcester Road has been given a new lease of life thanks to volunteers from the Forest. Forest of Dean District Council Community Builders, volunteers from local businesses Seetec Plus, Accxel and Prospect Training joined our team to redecorate the centre, which is used by local residents and community groups.

Our journey to net zero carbon



Funding secured for additional retrofit works

In the last edition of Tenant Topics, we provided an update on our retrofit pilot project at Blakeney in the Forest of Dean. Work has continued at this site, and we hope that all work at the properties will be completed this summer.

We've been using this project to gain a better understanding of how our homes currently perform and find the best solutions to help us make improvements at more of our properties. We are committed to improving the energy performance of our homes, making them more affordable to heat and reducing our impact on the environment.

Working with our consortium partners, we submitted a bid for further funding from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), to help us complete similar work at more properties.

We are really pleased to report that the bid was successful, and we are now in the process of identifying the homes that will be part of our next retrofit project. We have received a grant of around £200,000 from Wave 1 funding, which will help improve the energy performance of more of our homes in the County.

These retrofit projects play an important part in helping us learn the best ways to improve the energy efficiency of our homes and achieving net-zero carbon in the future.



Local offers for tenants

We are always looking for ways that we can provide additional support to our tenants. We have a number of 'local offers' which are designed to add value to our tenants. These were recently reviewed and include a number of things such as:

- Providing opportunities for tenants to get involved with their housing association in different ways.
- Sharing how we have used your feedback to help shape and deliver our services.
- Fitting at least one USB socket when we rewire a property, and;
- Providing an adaptation service to make our properties more suitable for our tenants. (This includes adaptations that do not require contact with occupational therapists or social services)

You can find the full list of our 'local offers' on our website:

www.tworivershousing.org.uk/your-home/extra-services/local-offers

Alternatively, you can call our contact centre who can provide the information by post.



B I V H S K Q X N H J W D K
 K C A R A T O U B C S A G D
 I R W N N X S X O I L T G B
 T G N V D V D Z Z S U E P B
 E Z T F A I B C I H C R O D
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 H P I C N I C A U X B J M L
 A L I I T P O C Y W O Z L A

Which of these Summer words is missing from the wordsearch?

Beach Pool
 Holiday Sandals
 Ice cream Shell
 Kite Snorkel
 Lemonade Sun
 Picnic Watermelon

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number/email: _____

Preferred voucher: ☐ Amazon ☐ Tesco ☐ M&S ☐ B&Q ☐ Argos

Summer tea break

You can enter by emailing your name, full postal address, your preferred voucher, and the hidden word to us at communications@2rh.org.uk or by completing the form and returning it in the post to:

Communications team, Two Rivers Housing, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent, Gloucestershire GL18 1DS

The first correct answer selected at random after **31 August 2022** will win a £15 gift voucher.

The missing word in our spring wordsearch was **BLOSSOM**.

Good luck!

Win a £15 voucher!

Grab a pen and a cuppa, sit back and complete our springtime teaser!

Simply find the words in the wordsearch and let us know which one is missing and you could win a £15 voucher.



Contact us:

Please tell us if you would like this in large print or on audio CD.
 Freephone **0800 316 0897** Email customerservices@2rh.org.uk


tworivers
 HOUSING

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