

Welcome to
Camoys Court

Strategic Disposal

Project Bridgewater



Overview

In line with our Board's vision to simplify our services and focus on our core purpose as a landlord of general needs, rented homes, we completed a transfer of 23 schemes to Housing 21 in September 2024.

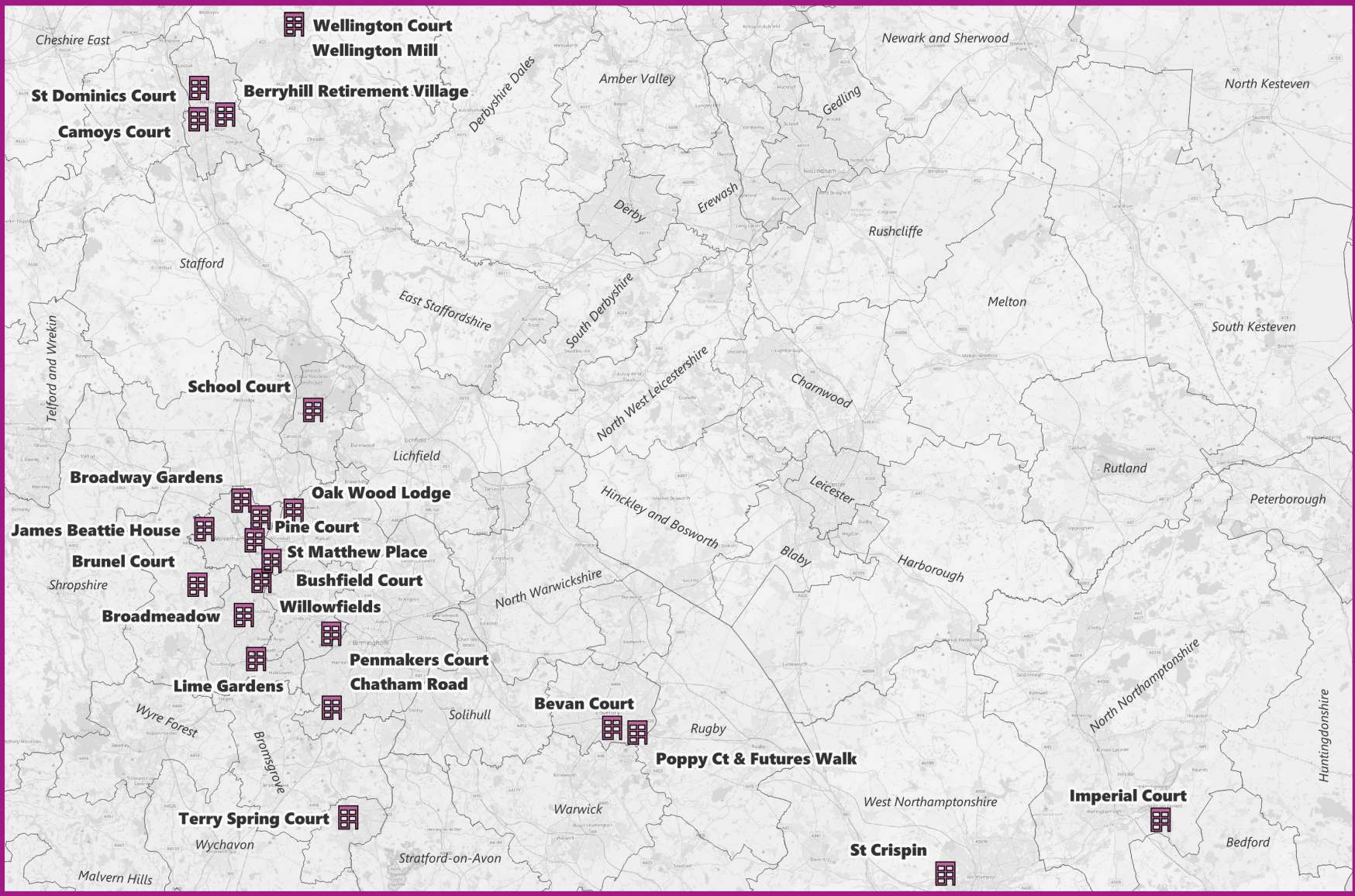
The transfer concerned 21 Extra Care Villages and 2 Sheltered Schemes in the West Midlands, home to over 1500 residents and staffed by 150 Midland Heart employees. An offer had been made by Housing 21 for these schemes, which was provisionally accepted by our Board subject to tenant and colleague consultations.

Housing 21 are, like us, a charitable, registered and regulated housing provider. The only difference is they specialise in accommodation for older people, especially Extra Care schemes

We believed that transferring these schemes to a specialist Extra Care and Retirement Living provider, whose sole focus is to provide high-quality housing, care and services for older people, was in the best interest of our tenants, and would offer colleagues more opportunities to develop in their chosen careers.

The proceeds of this sale will go towards providing more affordable housing in the Midlands and investing in the energy efficiency and quality of our current general needs portfolio.

Map of affected schemes



Our disposal strategy

Project timeline



legal deadlines

comms & consultation deadlines



Exchanged contracts with H21 following Board approval

May 2024

Completed transaction with H21

September 2024

May 2024

Housing 21 & Midland Heart joint visits to schemes

September 2024

Outcome of consultation and confirmation of transfer communications

1st October 2024

Completion letters to stakeholders, RNS and PR

May - July 2024

Second tenant consultation

June - August 2024

Colleague Consultation

Exit letters for Colleagues & Residents



Communications and tenant consultation strategy

It was extremely important to us that all residents and colleagues affected were communicated with regularly and felt well-informed throughout the transfer process.

Due to the scale and significance of the transfer, we chose to announce this proposal in person, via face-to-face briefings on 12th March 2024, with our colleagues, residents and their next of kin. These briefings took place at each of the 23 schemes involved, with members of our Executive Team and Directors Group in attendance to ensure all affected residents and colleagues were told at the same time, preventing any key messages from being misinterpreted or miscommunicated. These visits were supplemented with written communications which included further information around the tenant consultation or TUPE contract information for colleagues.

Tenant Consultation Phase 1

Our visits to schemes on 12th March 2024 marked the start of the first tenant consultation between Midland Heart and our residents. During this 4-week period residents were encouraged to share their thoughts on the proposed transfer, which were later collated, summarised and shared with each scheme for transparency, and with the Midland Heart Board for consideration.

At this stage, feedback was largely positive, with 98% of residents confirming they understood what was being proposed.

Initial concerns raised included:

- How will this affect the care provision at my scheme?
- Will the care and scheme staff stay the same?
- Will my scheme become more of a care home?
- Will the community balance be maintained?
- Will my tenancy agreement change?
- Will my rent and service charges increase?
- As a leaseholder, what are my rights?

At this point residents were also extremely keen to meet with Housing 21 to better understand who they are, what they do and what life with them would look like beyond a transfer. However, as at this point our Board had not made a final decision on the proposal, with no deal done or decision made, we felt it appropriate to keep this consultation between Midland Heart and our residents only. We did however, address all of the questions asked and provide information about H21 to scheme managers to disseminate.





Tenant Consultation Phase 2

To be fully compliant with consultation regulations, we ran a second tenant consultation this time for a longer period of 8 weeks, from 21st May to 16th July 2024, to give more detailed information about Housing 21 and outline the pros and cons of what we were proposing.

Listening to our tenants, we arranged for Housing 21 to meet all colleagues and residents at each of the 23 schemes to talk more about the services they provide and offer reassurance to those who were apprehensive of a change in landlord.

We also arranged 8 follow-up visits to Housing 21 schemes, to give our residents an insight into how these are run and what life post-transfer might look like.

We received next to no questions from tenants at this stage and having reviewed all feedback at the end of this consultation period, our Board felt there were no concerns that couldn't be fully addressed, and agreed to proceed with the transfer, subject to satisfactory legal agreements.

Colleague Consultation

We have received little to no feedback from individual colleagues following the announcement on 12th March but still met weekly with scheme managers to answer questions and address any concerns, which helped to keep colleague enquiries to a minimum and ensure they felt supported during this period.

The formal colleague consultation began on 13th June 2024, where pre-elected colleague representatives met with representatives from Housing 21 to discuss around the specifics of their transfer to Housing 21's employment. A further 3 meetings were held during this colleague consultation period, supplemented by written FAQs from both organisations.

Again, our Board felt there were no concerns that couldn't be fully addressed and were satisfied to proceed with the transfer of these colleagues to Housing 21's employment at the end of the transfer period.

midland
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Bushfield Court 

Handover & completion

Throughout the summer of 2024, we worked alongside our Housing 21 counterparts to develop robust cut over plans for each operational area. We wanted to make sure that the services passed seamlessly on the day of the transfer so that tenants were not adversely affected. We also wanted to ensure that our colleagues transferring over to Housing 21 were given sufficient training on new processes and ways of working so they were able to confidently continue the services at schemes.

Following Board approval to complete, all the schemes passed to Housing 21's ownership on 30th September 2024. We successfully managed the repairs and housing management services together with Housing 21 in the weeks leading up to completion so that the handover was as seamless as possible, with minimal disruption to residents.



Where are we headed?

We're confident that the transfer of these 23 schemes to a specialist Retirement Living provider will build on the high-quality services we have provided to our residents and offer colleagues more opportunities to develop in their chosen careers.

We remain proud of and committed to our retirement living services that remain and will continue to invest in these schemes going forward. This transfer, which is one of the largest to have been undertaken in our sector, will give us valuable additional resource to make our next corporate plan our most ambitious yet. The resources from this transfer will be directed back into the organisation, enabling us to continue to build new, affordable homes that are needed in the Midlands. We will also invest in our existing homes to ensure that over 6,000 homes are fit for modern living with greater levels of energy efficiency, all at an EPC rating of C by 2030.

Through simplifying and streamlining our services, making sure our performance aligns with our tenants' expectations and new consumer regulations, we approach our next corporate plan hyper focused on our core social purpose as a landlord, committed to providing quality, affordable homes across the Midlands.



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