

Who We Are

Elim is a small association with large ambitions. Our customers include families and single people living in properties for rent, residents of our supported accommodation services who are at risk of homelessness, young people undertaking apprenticeships or training, and people buying houses that we have developed, among others.

We have the same aim for all these relationships: to ensure that the housing and services Elim provide serve as a platform for growth, facilitating all our customers to achieve their aspirations.

In this way, we make our homes truly life changing, ensuring that our service has a positive impact even after an individual's time in an Elim home.

The Rise of Social Housing

In the early 1960s, the UK government introduced several policies to encourage the construction of new homes to address the housing shortage across the country.

The 1961 Housing Act provided subsidies for the construction of new homes by local authorities and aimed to increase the number of new quality homes built each year.

This move was essential in stimulating housing construction during the 1960s, contributing to the overall improvement of living conditions in the UK.

Where Elim started

Elim Housing Association was founded in 1963 by the Elim Church with just two properties in Eastbourne.

Two of the most significant founders and champions of the early development of Elim Housing Association were Ministers F W Harper and E J Phillips. Both had worked in the housing sector, and this professional experience combined with their strong Christian faith, made them a driving force in the organisation's formation and early growth.

In the last 60 years Elim has developed in size and breadth, and now offers a wide range of housing and related homelessness services across South West England, Birmingham and Wales. Although the geographic areas we serve have changed over the years, our aim 'to meet housing need and deliver homes that change people's lives' has remained the same.



"Elim has a vision to meet housing need and deliver homes that change people's lives"

1960's

In the early 1960s, the UK government introduced several policies to encourage housing construction to address the shortage of homes and improve general living conditions.

Elim Housing Association was founded by the Elim Church in response to several key factors affecting the UK's housing sector:

Post-War Housing Shortage:

After World War II, the UK faced a severe housing shortage due to the loss of homes during the war and a rapidly growing population. Many families were living in overcrowded and substandard conditions, while others faced homelessness.

Government Intervention:

Despite efforts to address the housing crisis, government intervention only went so far to meet the growing demand for affordable homes. Many housing associations were formed at this time with an aim to tackle rising homelessness.



Christian Responsibility:

The founders of Elim Housing believed in the importance of helping those in need, viewing it as a crucial part of their Christian faith. The organisation's mission and the establishment of the housing association was grounded in the principles of compassion, community, and social justice.

Key Dates:

1963: Elim Housing Association is founded.

1966: BBC drama 'Cathy Come Home' airs putting homelessness at the forefront of discussion. It's broadcast marked a shift in attitude towards social housing.

1970's

Across the UK, community groups consisting of social housing residents formed to push back against the rise of tower blocks and densely populated estates.

These groups played a huge part in shifting public policy away from high-rise blocks.

1974 saw the introduction of a new Housing Act which meant housing associations could now access substantial public funding for the first time to build new social homes. By the late 1980's, there were more than 400,000 housing association homes in England.

Key dates;

1975: Elim Housing registers with the Housing Corporation marking our commitment to provide more affordable quality homes to those experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness.

1977: The completion of one of Elim's first larger developments in Bristol, Philips House on Dove Street South. (Pictured below)





Ron Jones House, Stokes Croft, Bristol.
1984

1980's

The 1980s marked a significant change in social housing policy as Margaret Thatcher's government allowed renters to buy their social homes at a discounted rate through the scheme 'Right to Buy' for the first time.

Simultaneously, local authorities who previously had the resources and influence to build and manage social housing now faced tougher restrictions, which resulted in the number of new builds drastically fall during this decade.

In the late 1980s, Large-Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) policies were introduced, enabling local council's to transfer their social housing into housing association ownership. These large scale transfers became increasingly prevalent over the following decade.

Although Elim was not involved in any LSVT process, it did have an influence on the size and shape of the housing sector, setting Elim and its geographically dispersed housing portfolio apart from larger associations with a local concentration of homes.

Throughout the 1980s, Housing Associations were given new freedoms to borrow private funding to build new homes, topping up the funding they received from the government. Since then, housing associations have delivered the majority of new social homes built in recent years, but there is a still a shortfall against housing need.

The Housing Act 1988 was also an important legal milestone for the sector, modernising and clearly defining the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants.

Key Dates;

1984: Elim purchases a disused building in the heart of Stokes Croft, Bristol. Shortly afterwards it opens as 'Ron Jones House', providing support to 40 male residents. It remains a key part of the men's homelessness accommodation pathway commissioned by Bristol City Council today.

1984: After previously leasing the building, Elim purchases a property known as 'The Forecastle' in South Gloucestershire, and begins it's first extensive refurbishment to address homelessness in the area.

1989: Elim hits the 200 homes mark with many new schemes opening across London and Birmingham.

Elim, through its Housing Association, has found a way to serve the community. They have reduced some-ones needs." Mr. Jones said: "the housing will be a continuous Christian society." Mr. Jones is meeting the needs of the elderly people for many years the Association has provided just over 200. Most of these are for young people. The new home in London stands on an



Derek Green, Elim Chairman and Simon Hughes, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Southwark, London at the opening of scheme 'Brewster House'.

1990's

Labour returned to government under Tony Blair, and endeavoured to be seen as a party that provided socially progressive ideals with economic responsibility.

Throughout most of the decade, there was an increase in the number of first time buyers taking out a mortgage, making home ownership a reality.

Unfortunately house prices began to drop rapidly and unemployment figures rose to 3 million. People who had taken out big mortgages during the housing boom could no longer afford the repayments. Record numbers of people now relied on social housing providers.

As Elim Housing Association began to grow and expand its reach, it took on its own identity, separate from the Elim Church in 1998. This led to a change in approach to governance and management.

Although there was no longer a formal connection between the Elim Church and the Housing



Association, the mutual respect and support was evident. Several members of the Elim Church continued to contribute to our Board and Committee for several more years.

Key Dates;

1992: Alistair Allender is appointed as Elim CEO.

1993: Elim relocates it's Head Office from Kings Square, Bristol to Thornbury, South Gloucestershire.

1997: Elim focuses its growth and development plans on the acquisition and re-use of existing empty properties such as Bristol scheme, 'Hathaway House'.

1998: Elim's first Gloucester Support Scheme, Taylor House, opens its doors (Pictured above).

1998: Elim officially becomes an independent entity, formally parting ways with the Elim Church.

2000's

In 2002 the Government committed to raising standards in social housing.

The new Decent Homes Standard was introduced, setting minimum standards for a home's state of repair, modernisation and thermal comfort

Tony Blair was replaced by Gordon Brown as Prime Minister in 2007 and a new Green Paper, Homes for the Future, was announced.

This scheme aimed to make housing delivery more affordable and sustainable, setting a target to increase house building rates to 240,000 homes a year by 2016.

Key Dates:

2001: Elim takes over the management of Deakin House, Gloucester. A Dry House for those recovering from substance abuse.

2004: Elim Housing reach the 600 home mark.

2004: Phoenix Place Support scheme opens it's doors to young women in Bristol. It now supports single women and mums and babies at risk of homelessness (pictured below).

2006: Lanercost & Wigton support scheme for young parents opens in Southmead, Bristol.

2006: Due to expansion, Elim's Head Office is relocated from Thornbury to it's current location at Rudgeway, South Gloucestershire.

2009: Gloucester Young Parents Service is launched, providing support and accommodation to individuals and their children.





Opening day at Greenfields Way Gypsy and Traveller site, WSM. 2015

2010's

The Homeless Reduction Bill was passed in 2017 and instructed councils to begin assessing someone at risk of having their house repossessed 56 days before they lose their home in a bid to decrease rising homelessness rates. In September 2018, The Government announced an extra £2 billion in funding for new developments, praising social housing and calling for an end to the stigma of social homes.

Key Dates

2010: Support scheme Tudor House opens, providing a service for young people in Nailsea, North Somerset.

2011: A bumper year for development and acquisition. Elim delivered 87 new affordable homes across 5 new housing schemes in Bristol and Gloucester.



Musket Close, Gloucester, 2011

2015: Elim opens its first Gypsy and Traveller Site, Greenfields Way in Weston Super Mare and Carrswood View, Bath. Together, they offer permanent homes to 32 GRT families.

2016: Elim launches commercial subsidiary, Lime Property Ventures and delivers 22 units of student accommodation.

2018: Forecastle, South Gloucestershire undergoes its second redevelopment.

2019: Celebrating Bristol's Housing; Past, Present and Future. Elim and other Bristol Housing Associations and Bristol City Council came together under the Bristol Housing Partnership (BHP) to launch its new charter.

2020's

During November 2020, The White Paper on social housing sector announces additional consumer regulation by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and new "Tenant Satisfaction Measures" (TSM) used to assess the performance of social housing providers.

Key Dates:

2020: The UK entered its first national lockdown as a response to Covid-19. During this period, Elim continues to deliver all support services and carries out welfare calls to all General Needs residents.

2020: Elim appoints Paul Smith as our new Group Chief Executive.

2021: Elim elects its first female Chair of the Board, Sally Mason.

2021: The Customer Scrutiny Group is launched and residents are invited to provide feedback directly on our services, enabling us to assess our performance.



Bristol Lord Mayor visits Rosemeadow View Gypsy and Traveller site.

2022: Elim becomes one of the largest national providers of Gypsy Roma & Traveller accommodation.

2022: Elim rebrands, unveiling a fresh and modern logo to reflect who we are today.

2023: Elim's first specialist supported housing scheme opens. Providing an adapted home for an individual with complex care needs.

July 2023: Elim now owns or manages 909 homes, including 500 affordable homes for rent, 251 supported accommodation homes, 88 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, 38 Shared Ownership Homes and 22 homes for Student Accommodation.