

ANNUAL REPORT

Portsmouth Housing Authority
& PHA Housing Development, Ltd.

2025



WWW.PORThOUSING.ORG



INFO@NH-PHA.COM



245 MIDDLE STREET,
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801

A YEAR OF ACTION

This year, we are celebrating the life of Ruth Griffin. Mrs. Griffin served on PHA's Board for 42 years, 18 of those as Chair. Mrs. Griffin was immensely proud of the work of PHA, exemplified in the care and confidence she had in our residents every day. We are lucky to have Mrs. Griffin's son, Michael, taking his mom's seat on our board. I am grateful to call Mrs. Griffin a dear friend who enriched my life and the lives of many families here in Portsmouth.



Craig W. Welch
Executive Director

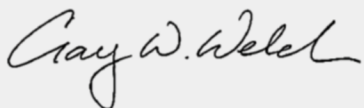
Here at the PHA, our positive impact on our community continues to grow in both scope and impact. We are not just adding new affordable housing opportunities - we are building a more vibrant, inclusive, and connected Portsmouth.

I believe Portsmouth is the best small city in America. Our culture is one that shows kindness, dignity and respect for all of our people and visitors. No matter your income, origin, ability, faith, or your life's goals, this city values you. This includes the more than 1,000 residents who call PHA properties home, and who are an important part of the fabric of our community—rising early to work, caring for others, serving our schools and hospitals, volunteering, and contributing in countless ways.

Working alongside City staff, elected officials, housing advocates, and neighbors, we are leading an energetic response to the housing crisis. Portsmouth needs at least 1,500 new affordable homes to stabilize the market. Across New Hampshire, the estimated shortfall is 23,500 units—with projections pointing to a need for 90,000 by 2040. Nationwide, the U.S. lacks 7.3 million affordable rental homes for low-income households, a key driver of homelessness.

Along with our pipeline of 171 new affordable housing units, we have invested millions in sustainable building improvements and renewable energy, strengthened our award-winning Resident Services team, expanded our housing supports for foster youth, and continued to advocate for housing and energy policies at every level of government. It's been an outstanding year.

I'm grateful every day to serve this city I'm proud to call home. Thank you to our Board of Commissioners, our dedicated staff, our partners across the city and state, and most importantly, our residents—you inspire us daily.





REMEMBERING RUTH GRIFFIN

July 9, 1925 – August 10, 2024

A PILLAR OF PORTSMOUTH HOUSING

This past year, Portsmouth Housing lost a beloved leader and tireless advocate with the passing of Ruth Griffin. Ruth brought deep compassion, fierce determination, and a steadfast commitment to public service that shaped our mission and strengthened our impact.

A trailblazer in New Hampshire politics and civic life, Ruth never forgot the importance of dignity and opportunity for all. She guided our organization through decades of growth with wisdom, grit, and humor—always reminding us that housing is not just about buildings, but about people.

Her legacy lives on in every home we build and every family we serve. We are deeply grateful for her vision, leadership, and friendship. We are especially grateful to her family for continuing her spirit of service.

"She was active every moment. Every time she knew there was something that needed to be done or could be done, she got involved."

—Joan Griffin

"She was very outspoken and was an advocate for the city."

—Robert J. Lister



"Her commitment and advocacy led to innumerable initiatives that made our area a great place to live, raise a family and work"

—U.S. Sen. Judd Gregg

"Ruth was a pillar of the Portsmouth community... Her long record of public service is a model for many serving in office today."

—U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen

FORWARD MOMENTUM AND CONTINUING SERVICE



13 PROPERTIES



682 RENTAL UNITS



1,700+ PEOPLE SERVED



9% INCREASE IN RENTAL SUBSIDY PROGRAMMING



\$5.2 MILLION PAID TO 160+ LOCAL LANDLORDS



\$2.4 MILLION IN ENERGY
AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS



25+ LOCAL CONTRACTORS



2 ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES
AND 171 UNITS IN DEVELOPMENT

PHA TEAM



CONNECTED, ENGAGED, AND GROWING

At Portsmouth Housing, our A+ recognition is a reflection of the dedication, professionalism, and compassion our team brings to serving the community. With 40 staff members across departments (including property management, maintenance, Resident Services, administration, and finance) we work collaboratively and with a shared commitment to our mission.

We invest in our people through ongoing training and enrichment programs that promote professional growth, strengthen our service, and ensure that Portsmouth Housing staff remain connected, engaged, and well-equipped to serve the Portsmouth community with excellence.



TEAM SPOTLIGHT – CATHY GALLAGHER



With more than twenty years of dedication to housing work, Cathy has made a significant impact on PHA during her nearly three-year tenure by championing programs such as the Foster Youth Initiative and Moving to Work. These initiatives not only create opportunities for the community but also enhance PHA's mission. When she's not at work, Cathy loves cruising on her Harley, engaging in creative adventures, and cherishing moments with her family. The team is excited about her contributions and looks forward to her future accomplishments!

AWARD WINNING PROGRAMS



PORTSMOUTH HOUSING AND PARTNERS WIN NATIONAL AWARD FOR SENIOR WELLNESS



Pictured: Daphne Rivera, PHA Resident Services Coordinator; Tania Marino, Culinary Director at Gather Café & UNH Project; Kelley Lesko, PHA Director of Resident Services; Nicole Finitsis, Director of the Portsmouth Senior Center.

In 2025, Portsmouth Housing, in partnership with the Portsmouth Senior Activity Center and Gather, was honored with a Program of Excellence award from the National Council on Aging's National Institute of Senior Centers. The recognition celebrates "Rock the Crock," a collaborative nutrition program that brings residents together for hands-on cooking demonstrations, shared meals, and resources to support healthy eating at home—including a mini crockpot, recipe book, and grocery gift card.



RESIDENT SERVICES IN ACTION

In 2024, our Resident Services Coordinators have truly excelled in their roles, going above and beyond to enrich our community. Their dedication has resulted in a variety of impactful activities and events that have brought our residents together. Highlights include trips to Star Island, National Night Out block parties, holiday celebrations, and a wide array of other programs designed to foster connection and engagement within our community.

CONNECTED COMMUNITY



GUEST APPEARANCES · ACTIVITIES · OUTINGS
COMMUNITY MEALS · CELEBRATIONS



VOLUNTEERS



We are deeply grateful to the volunteers who support our residents in so many meaningful ways. Whether it's providing meals and rides, lending a hand with activities and yardwork, or simply offering companionship, their time and care make a real difference. Their efforts not only help meet everyday needs, but also build a stronger sense of community and connection.

Volunteer with us!
Learn more or sign up:
Email volunteer@nh-phh.com

RESIDENTS GIVING BACK TO THEIR COMMUNITY

RYANN WOLF, PLANNING BOARD MEMBER

Ryann, newly elected to Portsmouth's Planning Board, blends her love of history and community into everything she does. After childhood summers in Portsmouth and a degree in Historic Preservation from Cornell, she returned to work at Strawberry Banke and later found her calling with children at Seacoast Community School, where she's been for over a decade. Whether helping shape the city's future or celebrating its past, Ryann brings dedication—and often her clever black cat—wherever she goes.



ROBERT ETKIN, U.S. VETERAN

Robert brings heart and hometown pride to Portsmouth Housing. A veteran with roots in the city, he returned after years in Massachusetts, drawn back by a strong sense of home. From coaching Little League to organizing bingo nights and supporting neighbors, Robert has always fostered community. His story reflects the connection, safety, and beauty he finds in Portsmouth—values he helps bring to life every day.

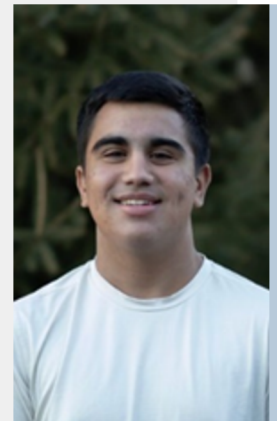
VOLUNTEERS

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS WITH THE VISION & DRIVE TO GIVE BACK



ELI GEORGE – B3 YOUTH PROGRAM

"After coaching a fifth grade boys' basketball team in 2023, I saw a gap: some families could afford private leagues, while others were working second or third jobs just to get by. I wanted to change that. In April 2024, I founded the B3 Youth Clinic, a 100% student-run organization offering free weekly basketball sessions, support programs, and community events at Gosling Meadows. Since then, we've raised over \$125,000, built a state-of-the-art basketball court, and sponsored 78 kids for the holidays. B3 has become a space where kids can build confidence, feel supported, and find success both on and off the court. We're just getting started. Learn more at b3youthclinic.org."



ELENA HARTLEY – DANCE WITH GOSLING

"I've been dancing for over 15 years. Dance has given me confidence, joy, and a strong sense of self, and I wanted to share that with kids who might not otherwise have access to the arts. That's why I started Dance with Gosling, a free weekly dance program for children in Gosling Meadows. Every week, I'm inspired by their energy, growth, and excitement. What started as a way to give back has become something much bigger: a space where kids can express themselves, support one another, and discover the joy of movement and community."



EXPANDING THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING



SHERBURNE SCHOOL WORKFORCE HOUSING

CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth Housing is proud to partner with the City in redeveloping the Sherburne School property into 127 units of affordable workforce housing, community spaces, and recreational amenities. As a Portsmouth community-driven organization, we are committed to preserving the site's historical significance while meeting the community's housing needs. With proven success in housing development, including the award-winning Ruth Lewin Griffin Place, PHA has the expertise to lead this project. PHA ensures that all resources stay local, strengthening the city's nonprofit housing infrastructure and providing long-term benefits. We look forward to working together to make this project a success for Portsmouth.



DEMONSTRATING EXCELLENCE

PHA was chosen as the developer for the Sherburne School workforce housing project from a competitive pool of eight local leaders and nationally recognized firms, reflecting our expertise and commitment to the community.



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

PHA hosted three community meetings to gather feedback on design and amenities. These sessions allowed us to inform, answer questions, and address concerns, ensuring the project aligns with community needs.

BUSINESSES INVESTING IN HOUSING



CHRIST CHURCH WORKFORCE HOUSING PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

The Christ Church Workforce Housing project has successfully navigated legal challenges and is progressing steadily. It will provide 40 workforce and transitional housing units in partnership with HAVEN, in a location near the Urban Forestry Center with access to transit, jobs, and essential services. Supported by NHHFA, CDFA tax credits, congressionally directed spending, and the Federal Home Loan Bank, the project aims to model inclusive, affordable living in Portsmouth.



TAX CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

LOCAL BUSINESSES CAN SUPPORT WORKFORCE HOUSING IN PORTSMOUTH BY PURCHASING CDFA TAX CREDITS

We are currently seeking pledges to support our workforce housing development at Christ Church on Lafayette Road in Portsmouth. Your support will help bring 40 units of permanently affordable workforce housing to our community.



SCAN HERE TO
LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE PROJECT



SCAN HERE TO PLEDGE
SUPPORT

DONOR SPOTLIGHT – CANDIA WOODS AND THE OAKS GOLF LINKS

Peter Harrity and Peter George have helped transform Candia Woods and The Oaks Golf Links into top-tier golf destinations. Beyond the course, their community commitment shines through their investment in workforce housing via Portsmouth Housing Authority tax credits—supporting the Christ Church project to provide affordable homes for local workers and boosting the regional economy.



FY 2025 – FY 2026 TAX CREDIT SUPPORTERS:

CANDIA WOODS & THE OAKS GOLF LINKS
PROCON INC.
BAYBERRY FINANCIAL
BAKER NEWMAN & NOYES
BANK OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
MEREDITH VILLAGE SAVINGS BANK
UPTON & HATFIELD LLP



PARTNERS



The City of Portsmouth

Over the past two years, the Mayor and City Council, working with City staff, and local housing advocates, have made the most significant investments in affordable housing in decades. The City sponsored Portsmouth Listens sessions on housing drew more than a 140 residents to engage in finding solutions to our housing crises. By thoughtfully engaging residents in the Land Use Committee and the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Housing Committee, zoning has been updated and dozens of city owned sites for have been evaluated for potential for development. Offering the Sherburne School property for below-market-rate housing development is leading to the largest expansion in our affordable housing in more than a half-century.



Seacoast Pedal It Forward (SPIF) helps residents overcome transportation barriers by providing refurbished bikes to those without reliable options. In just their first year, they've given away over 300 bikes —keeping people moving and keeping bikes out of the waste stream.

Seacoast Women's Giving Circle brings enriching, educational programs to our school-aged residents. Through weekly volunteer-led sessions like Books & Buddies and Math Games, they make learning fun and engaging.

The Portsmouth Community Fridge, opened this year at our Woodbury Manor property, is a volunteer-run fridge that provides an opportunity for neighbors to take what they need and leave what they can.



PARTNERS



LANDLORD HIGHLIGHT – GRANITE PLACE

Granite Place & Residents First Property Management Corp. has been an outstanding partner to Portsmouth Housing, consistently demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusive, supportive housing. While accepting our Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), they have also welcomed tenants using Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers, providing young people transitioning out of the foster care system with access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Their willingness to work with vulnerable populations reflects the kind of collaboration that strengthens our community and changes lives.



PARTNERS IN HOUSING ADVOCACY



CHAMBER COLLABORATIVE OF GREATER PORTSMOUTH

President Ben Van Camp and the Chamber Collaborative team have helped bring the business community into vital housing conversations and advocate for diverse housing options, streamlined development processes, and workforce sustainability.

We are grateful for their continued commitment to making Portsmouth a place where all can live and thrive.

WORKFORCE HOUSING COALITION OF THE GREATER SEACOAST

Led by Executive Director Emmy Ham and Housing Navigator Taylor Cray, the Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast (WHC) brings expertise, passion, and tireless advocacy to every project they support.

WHC's mission is to catalyze the development of affordable housing options for the diverse workforce in the Greater Seacoast. Their work includes technical assistance, public education, advocacy, and strategic messaging designed to help communities respond to growing housing needs.



SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE



Portsmouth Housing prioritizes green energy solutions in all new building designs and actively works to improve energy performance in our existing portfolio. Through thoughtfully planned upgrades, we aim to improve our environmental impact, while also reducing energy costs.

SUSTAINABILITY PARTNER AGENCIES

**REVISION ENERGY****CLEAN ENERGY NH**
Your Voice in All Energy Matters**EVERSOURCE**
ENERGY

PHA ADVANCES IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- Renovation of the basketball court at Gosling Meadows with a new surface and hoops
- Ongoing electrical upgrades at Gosling Meadows expected to finish this spring
- Bidding underway for a handicap lift project at Connors Cottage
- HVAC upgrade at Feaster Apartments
- Installation of 37 new energy-efficient refrigerators at Gosling Meadows and a smoke detector replacement project slated for completion



LEADERSHIP

The Commissioners and Directors of the all-volunteer PHA Boards are residents of Portsmouth who are motivated to improve the quality of life for their fellow Portsmouth residents. Their care, expertise, and persistence are leadership qualities that make a huge impact on the Portsmouth community.

Board of Commissioners

Appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council, Commissioners serve staggered five-year terms and help shape policy and oversight for the Portsmouth Housing Authority.

Thomas Ferrini, Chair
Kara Rodenhizer, Vice Chair
Daniel Main, Treasurer
Robin Pickering, Assistant Treasurer
Kathleen Bergeron, Commissioner
Michael Griffin, Commissioner

PHA Housing Development, Ltd.

Board of Directors

This nonprofit board focuses on creating new housing opportunities. It includes two PHA-appointed members and four community members approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Adam Ruedig, President
Katherine Kane, Vice President
Kathleen Bergeron, Treasurer
Thomas Ferrini, Secretary
John Bohenko, Director
Ernie Carrier, Director

Resident Advisory Board



Resident Advisory Board members are community leaders who live in PHA housing and represent the collective resident voice. Board members help strengthen communication to ensure resident needs and priorities are at the center of our work.

Executive Director

Craig W. Welch
craigwelch@nh-pha.com
603-436-4310 x 118





245 Middle Street | Portsmouth, NH
603-436-4310
www.porthousing.org

