

## Accord partners with mobile phone provider to keep customers connected

Accord Housing Association is helping to keep its customers connected thanks to a partnership with mobile phone company OPPO, and network provider giffgaff.

With the impacts of Covid-19 still being felt, it has been a difficult time for loved ones to see each other and keep in touch. Whilst many of us take our mobile phone for granted, not everyone has access to one, which can leave people feeling isolated, unsupported and unable to access services online.

The new initiative aims to help keep people connected by donating 300 mobile phones and prepaid sim cards to Accord customers.

Those benefitting from the scheme include customers who rely on internet access at the currently closed libraries, and people kept apart due to Covid-19 restrictions. Thanks to their new phones they are being reunited by video calls and can now access services and manage benefits online.

Sara Woodall, Executive Director of Homes and Communities at Accord Housing Association said: "We are delighted to be working with OPPO and giffgaff on this life changing project. We know that some of our customers have been heavily impacted by Covid-19 and this amazing donation of mobile phones from OPPO and sim cards from giffgaff is making a real difference. Those who have no access to a mobile phone can now get online to manage their benefits, pay bills, get support and catch up with loved ones at a time when many have been kept apart."

Kevin Cho, General Manager of OPPO UK said: "OPPO is really pleased to be involved in this initiative to supply mobile phones to support those who are finding things hard in these uncertain times. Having access to a mobile phone is a vital lifeline which enables people to keep in touch with friends and family and have access to essential key services, which many take for granted."

To further support those receiving the phones, network provider giffgaff are kindly providing three months of free data and calls to each customer.

Georgina Bramall, Head of Media & Brand at giffgaff: "At giffgaff, we know that community is more important than ever. When Accord got in touch, we were already doing what we can to help vulnerable members on our network and we were more than happy to support this initiative too. We're proud to be able to do our part to help people stay connected to their loved ones via the donation of the prepaid SIM cards, and hope it helps to make people feel a little less isolated, and provide the access they might need to key services."

Accord is one of the largest housing and social care organisations in the Midlands, providing 13,000 affordable homes and health and social care to 80,000 people and employing nearly 4,000.