

Hello!

Welcome to the ForHousing Annual Report 2021/22



Carol Mawers
Tenant Board member

For tenants like me, a safe, stable home underpins every aspect of our lives and this has only become more important during the pandemic.

As you'll read in this report, ForHousing has had a busy year working together with you and your communities to deliver its Corporate Plan. I'm really pleased you've continued to hold ForHousing to account to make sure that the voice of the tenant guides everything.

During my time as a tenant Board member, it was always my aim to be a tenant champion and ensure that every decision is made for your benefit. This year, ForHousing has continued to focus on listening to you. Because it's tenant experiences

and our voices that are influencing how services are developed and delivered in communities.

You'll see lots of examples of this in action in this report and it's been a real honour to meet and work with so many of you over the past 12 months.

I hope you feel a sense of pride, as I do, when you continue reading through this Annual Report. Thank you for playing your part and making a difference.

Carol Mawers

Tenant Board member, 2021/22





Homes Outcome **Summary**

Everyone deserves a safe, decent and truly affordable home. That's why we've invested £62.8 million to service, maintain, improve and build homes.



ALL

homes meet or exceed the Decent Homes Standard

1,965 home improvements and...

73,305 repairs were completed



ALL



200

new homes were built, through £31.5 million of investment

379 are being built for future years



99%

of repairs were completed on time, in an average of **7.1 days** (excluding out of hours and programmed repairs)

84%

of you said you were satisfied with the repairs service, 5% were dissatisfied and 11% gave no opinion (1,815 surveys completed)



outdoor areas were improved for you and your community to enjoy

330

homes had damp resolved under our new damp process which inspects reports within **10 days** and aims to complete 90% of repairs within 40 days





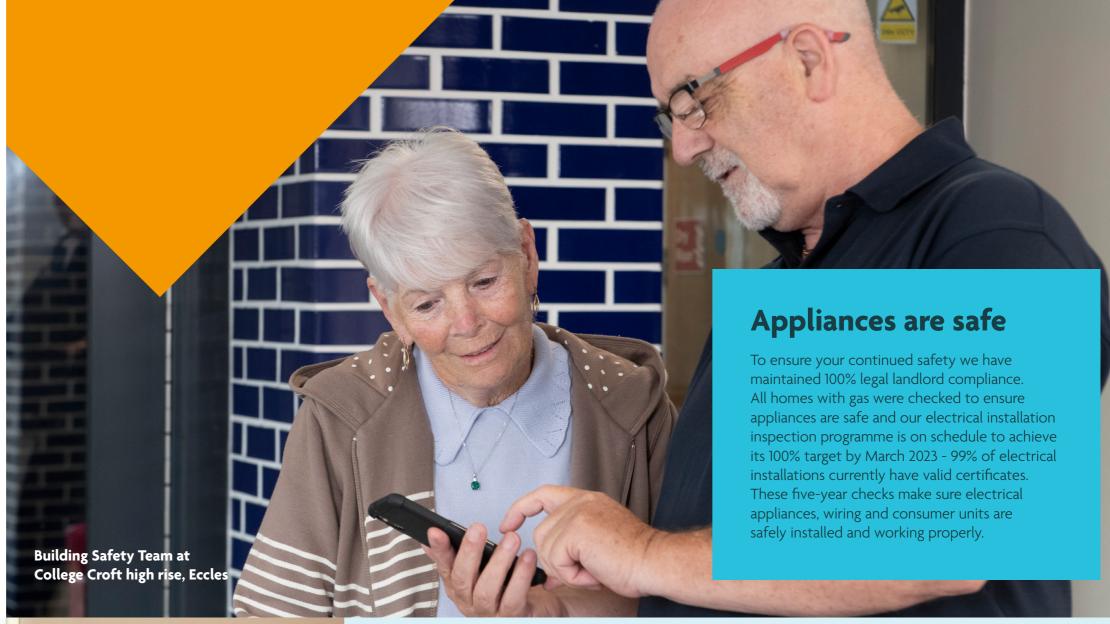
Homes

Everyone deserves a safe, warm and comfortable place to call home. That's why we've continued to focus on providing quality homes and places that make more things possible for more people.

Improving your home

We invested £31.3 million to service, maintain and improve existing homes and all continue to meet or exceed the Government's Decent Homes Standard. This included making 1,965 home improvements. We also completed 73,305 repairs, with 99% completed on time, in an average of 7.1 days (excluding out of hours and programmed repairs). All emergency repairs were completed within their 24 hour target.

84% of you said you were satisfied with the repairs service (1,529 out of 1,815 tenants surveyed), 5% (198) of you were dissatisfied and 11% (88) gave no opinion.







"Operatives were respectful, showed ID and explained what was going on."

You also said...

"This repair is incomplete, to improve get back to me about the next steps."

We listened and...

Changed our process so that the operative arranges the follow-on appointment before they leave the first visit, and if the trade is the same they return to complete the work.

High rise blocks are safe

We have invested in a new Building Safety Team to support the delivery of excellent housing services in our 17 high rise buildings. Working with you through a Building Safety Forum, we are also making sure you are helping us with decision making, and receiving clear and up-to-date information about how safety is being managed in your building.

Building Safety Officers carry out daily block safety checks, taking any action to maintain health and safety, and keep safety notice boards updated. All high rise blocks have sprinkler servicing certificates to ensure fire safety.



It is so good to see the information being provided on the communal safety notice board. It makes me feel safer knowing such checks and maintenance are being carried out

We also carried out 940 other block inspections, including low rise blocks, with 527 actions completed. This included 75 stairs, hallways and landings cleared of items to ensure fire safety by maintaining clear entrances and exits.

More tenants live independently

Our 1,224 supported homes benefit your wellbeing, with help on hand 24 hours a day.

Terry and Ann's story

Ann's mobility and independence was affected by a stroke, with her becoming reliant on Terry. They both decided they needed to move to a place where extra support was available. A Neighbourhood Officer referral to the supported housing team confirmed that a supported housing home was the best option for them. The regular checks via intercom systems and use of pendants and pull cords were a bonus, making them feel safe, wherever they are in their home.

Since moving in, Ann says she feels more safe and secure, especially knowing that someone is available if they need support. Ann has regained some of her independence and Terry is confident knowing that Ann can use the pendant or pull cord to get help, so he doesn't worry if he needs to go out.

Terry and Ann have also become active members of the social group and regularly attend activities, helping them feel less isolated at home than before. Ann says about living here...



Aww. it's brilliant. We are really happy here!



We also installed aids and adaptations to 527 homes, helping you to remain independent in your homes. By working with local authorities (councils) we jointly fund major adaptations, like level access ramps and wet rooms.

Letting homes quickly

We relet 964 homes in an average of 15.3 days, excluding homes that needed major works and those let through partners such as extra care homes.

93% of you said you were satisfied with the lettings service (258 out of 276 surveyed), 3% (8) of you were dissatisfied and 4% (10) gave no opinion.



₩ You said...

"The process was very quick and efficient. When I had any issues, you responded to me very quickly."



You also said...

"ForHousing could have informed me about the repairs that needed completing in the house."



We listened and...

We now aim to complete all repairs before home are let. We have also re-issued the homes standard to staff to identify any outstanding works at the viewing, should this be missed during the re-let works.

Better outdoor spaces

23 outdoor areas were improved to better use the space for you and your community to enjoy.

417 neighbourhood inspections identified and delivered actions to maintain the appearance of neighbourhoods and to ensure health and safety including:



cases of fly tipping resolved



abandoned vehicles removed



gardens in poor condition improved



New damp repairs process

As part of our commitment to providing quality homes and places, we made tackling damp and condensation a key priority, as you told us this is important to you.

We surveyed 1,567 tenants about this issue and spoke with 310 tenants who had recent damp related works in their home. We introduced a new team to ensure the new process was consistently delivered, as we now inspect reports of damp within ten days and aim to complete 90% of repairs within 40 days, making allowances for longer-term solutions where needed.

We also trained staff to ensure accurate reporting and introduced a digital system to help you track works from start to finish. You decide if the repair is completed and there is a three month follow up to check the damp issue is still resolved.



I'm confident that the damp issue has been resolved. I want to thank you for all the help and support you have given me.



Building more homes

We are building all types of homes so people have more options in choosing where they live. This year we built 200 new homes, through £31.5 million of investment, with another 379 new homes already in progress for future years.

Homes completed:



social rent homes in Salford - the low rent is set as truly affordable



31 affordable rent homes: 26 in Stockbridge Village; four in Fylde; and one in Ordsall (Salford) - the low rent is set as



market rent apartments at Dock 5, Ordsall - the rent is set in line with private



More local facilities

We've converted our former office space in Stockbridge Village into a skills centre to offer training in construction, like bricklaying, tiling and joinery, providing future career paths.

Our 14 shopping parades support 95 businesses to provide much needed local amenities and employment. We continue to deliver rent incentives, including £7,322 of rent credits during COVID-19, and general business advice to help businesses continue trading.



Maris House, Eccles

This £4.8 million development has given a new lease of life to the area by providing 39 social rent apartments on a former derelict social club site.

The scheme is close to local amenities and transport links, including Eccles town centre, and tenants have access to communal gardens, secure bike storage, private car parking and electric vehicle charging points.



I love my new home and it is great value for money, staff were welcoming and friendly.

77

The information I was given on my moving day was fantastic.



We have a range of projects to reduce carbon emissions, including monitoring energy use in 71 homes. We are also working with communities to raise awareness of how everyone can play their part, including tips on living in a greener way and working with schools and partners to educate the next generation.

Improvements have made homes more energy efficient including 462 A-rated high energy efficient boilers, with full heating systems, 187 external door and 726 double glazed windows, which also give better home security. New flat roofs, where the insulation was upgraded,

benefitted 87 homes within low and medium rise blocks. We are also carrying out energy efficiency improvements on 64 bungalows in Salford.

We are continuing to make the most of the performance of building materials, to improve the energy efficiency of your home. Energy efficiency is rated from "A" (the most efficient with low running costs) to "G" (the most inefficient with high running costs). Your homes have a higher than average rating of "B" (new homes) or "C" (existing homes).

Communities Outcome Summary

The following outcomes were delivered together with partners:

Safe, secure and well-maintained homes

17,422

households live in a wellmaintained and stable home 44%

of lets prevented homelessness (497 out of 1,125 lets)

Improving financial prospects

373

people accessed support to gain work skills – with 48 gaining qualifications and 64 completing work experience 112

people have already moved into paid work, education or taken their first steps into self-employment

Successful tenancies

402

households were supported to successfully keep tenancies, with £1.6 million of extra money accessed







Better health

81%

(786) of anti-social behaviour was resolved (out of 976 incidents)

455

people took part in 1,249 social activities to prevent loneliness

Connecting with your community

£94,435

of grants were awarded for communities to run local activities

Learning life skills

845

children attended school holiday activities

638

young people developed life skills at five youth clubs

160

children enjoyed quality family learning time at four family clubs 43

pupils attended construction skills training to improve their career options

More ways to be online

You accessed services through;

12,371 webchats

785 online appointment bookings

92 virtual viewings of empty homes

people living in Extra Care took part in tech lessons to help them get online

Communities

We've continued to focus on creating the best possible environment for you to thrive, become part of your community and fulfil your potential.

Providing secure, affordable, well-maintained homes

A home is the foundation for a better life and providing homes for social and affordable rent continued to be our main priority, with 17,422 households living in a well-maintained and stable home.



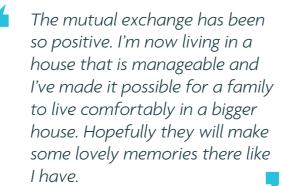
Laura, Jane and Sarah each had their own tenancy and although they wanted to move home, to better meet their needs, the allocations rules meant they were not high priority for a move.

By exchanging homes they found they could each have their preferences met - moving to a larger or smaller home, or a different area to be closer to their family.

They submitted the paperwork to us and the other housing association involved. Neighbourhood officers from both organisations worked together to complete relevant checks including property inspections, gas and electric safety checks, and tenancy checks to ensure everything was up to date and accurate.

Once the process had been completed, they signed for their new homes and swapped keys, with all three successfully exchanging.

Sarah, who downsized, said



A summary of lettings



There were **1,125** lets, with 44% (497) to households who were homeless or at risk of being homeless



28 lets were to people leaving care



17 lets were to Armed Forces veterans



93 tenancies were changed to enable someone to have the security of a tenancy or to share responsibilities with a joint tenant



28 tenancies were succeeded, with a person living there taking over the tenancy after the tenant passed away



111 households swapped homes (exchanged) to better meet their needs



£34,169 of decoration and furniture vouchers enabled people to make a home

Learning life skills

We continued to invest in young people, supporting them to improve their skills, confidence and self-esteem through free activities.

- Our popular Play Streets sessions provided enjoyable activities to 845 children during the school holidays, including activity packs and a meal.
- Young people also learnt new things at our youth clubs, with 638 taking part.

By working closely with 15 schools, we provided a range of other opportunities for school pupils and their families. This included:

- Construction training to 43 Salford pupils to improve their future employment prospects.
- Interactive learning projects at Stockbridge Village School, benefitting 180 pupils.
- Four after-school family clubs enabled 160 children to enjoy quality time with their family by learning new things together.

We know that some young people need extra support to deal with challenging situations. That's why we funded personal development programmes for 46 primary school children to improve their behaviour. We also delivered therapy sessions for 12 pupils to help them overcome the impact of domestic abuse and achieve their full potential.



Yousef's story

Yousef began to attend one of our five youth clubs and his parent made staff aware that he had autism and very low confidence, due to worrying about being bullied. Yousef was very quiet and reserved, and reluctant to take part in any activities. Staff made a conscious effort to involve him in the multisport activities, to build a rapport and try to understand what activities he would like to do. One of the team asked Yousef to do the points system in a tournament

and he said yes. Yousef was fantastic and really engaged with the activity.

The following week he asked if he could do this for the air hockey and staff supported this. Yousef now actively takes part in all activities and has also accessed half term activities at a local academy, something he wouldn't have done before.

Keeping your tenancy

Everything we do is with you at the heart and we recognise everyone is different. If you're having difficulty managing your tenancy we work with you to agree a plan that's individual to your needs. This identifies and arranges extra support needed to help. We supported 402 tenants to successfully sustain tenancies, through advice on how to access benefits and grants, manage money, improve health and address issues in the home like hoarding and cleaning.

Together we prevented evictions and brought £1,641,567 extra money in for individual tenants. This includes income certified as guaranteed over future years, ensuring continued support.

Mark's story

Mark was recovering from a stroke and was due in court for rent arrears. He also had a lot of different debts from investments into his business which he wasn't able to pay off. Mark had always worked and been independent so he was embarrassed to be in the situation, with no solution he could find by himself. Due to poor mental health, he felt unable to speak to others and rarely answered his phone.

When Mark accepted tenancy support, he was upset and worried at his initial meeting. As well as anxiety about losing his home, he was afraid of having another stroke. Our tenancy sustainment officer spent time listening to him and working out the best course of action to address his issues. For the first time, he was able to engage with someone who was supporting him. He soon felt comfortable enough to speak to his debt advice worker and rents officer.

Mark's tenancy is no longer at high risk, his debts are under control and his mental and physical health are stable. He's since found full-time work and is now much better off with a great chance of continuing with his tenancy. Mark told us he is so grateful for the support which has helped him so much.

Better rent management

Our income team made over 20,720 successful contacts with tenants to discuss rent payments, including 672 tenants who were affected when their COVID-19 support packages ended.

Affordable repayment agreements were made with 4,886 tenants in arrears, with plans maintained by 80% (3,955), reducing arrears by £655,689.





Aaronn's story

After applying for work unsuccessfully, Aaronn started a Kickstart work placement for 16 to 25 year olds with our income maximisation team.

He said, "Every job you go for wants you to have experience, but it can be really hard to get it. Kickstart helps break that cycle and helps you get the foot in the door."

"Before I started the placement, I was on Universal Credit after losing my job due to the pandemic. I have been working since I was 16 so have lots of experience of working in hospitality and customer service, but still struggled to find work and it was a really tough time. The placement was brilliant. I was contributing to the team from the get-go which was really good."

"Now I am over the moon to have a permanent role as health and safety administrator. I have a career that I can develop now and the support to do that. I'm feeling tons more positive and I have the stability and security to plan my future."

He added, "In my experience Kickstart has helped me find a job more quickly than anything else could have. It helps people to get relevant experience in roles that can lead to careers not just endless shift work with no advancement."

Aaronn has now completed an Occupational Safety and Health qualification.

Reducing loneliness

It's been a particularly difficult time for tenants living in supported housing and extra care schemes who have been unable to socialise during the COVID-19 restrictions. It's widely recognised that loneliness and isolation is bad for health, so it was great to be able

to open up communal facilities, and support tenants to take part in social activities. Across 17 schemes, 455 tenants took part in 1,249 activities. The most popular events were bingo, coffee mornings, exercise classes, music and quizzes.



Lacey's story

Lacey is one of six apprentices and is studying a Level 2 in Housing and Property Management.

Lacey said,



I was going from job to job, warehousing, and things like that. Then I found this role and the description fitted everything I wanted for a job that I could have the rest of my life. It's been perfect, and now that I've completed the training, I'm quite happy. My team are amazing, I settled in quite fast, and I've always had the support and help when I've needed it.

Safer communities

We know anti-social behaviour (ASB) can have a negative impact on your health and wellbeing. We're here to support you to feel safe in your home and out in your community. During the year our community safety team investigated and closed 976 incidents,

resolving 81% (786). Unfortunately, despite all our efforts, some ASB can continue to escalate to legal action so during the year three households were evicted (one in Salford and two in Knowsley).



Connecting communities

Community groups successfully applied for grants to deliver activities. This included 150 grants from our community fund worth £74,500 (80 in Salford, 45 in Knowsley and 25 in Oldham). We also supported 19 community groups to successfully apply for £19,935 from other funders. Just some examples of these are:

We wouldn't have been able to hold the event on this scale and to offer it for free. The funding was invaluable.

Developing digital skills

The funding kept costs down to give equal opportunity for members of the community to join in and take part without feeling a financial pressure. It promotes team spirit, provided regular exercise for all ages and helped improve people's mental health due to the impact of COVID-19.

- Dance Dynamics, Fitton Hill



More ways to be online

We continue to work with you to offer more services online so you can get in touch with us easily in a way, and at a time, that suits you. This year you made 12,371 contacts with us through webchat, booked 785 appointments online and took part in 92 virtual viewings of available homes.

In extra care homes, 28 tenants took part in tech sessions to help them gain the skills needed to access the benefits of being online. This included connecting with family and friends through Zoom calls, instead of face-to-face contact where there were concerns about COVID-19.



In February, Stockbridge Village celebrated the local community through the Tall Tales project, one of the opening events for Knowsley Borough of Culture 2022.

The project was a stunning large-scale community artwork that saw Merecliff high rise block animated and illuminated in light, showcasing stories from the local area. 81 residents shared their memories of growing up and living in the community and an estimated 1,600 people joined in the celebrations by watching the projections.

We would like to thank the local community and partners who worked with us to celebrate Stockbridge Village as a great place to live.

I wanted to tell my story because it was something to bring the community together, and I thought it was a brilliant idea. It was a lovely feeling that my story was chosen as one of the exhibits for the show. I felt pride in my story being shown on the high rise, and I feel more connected with my community hearing their stories.







Overall we spent £3,569 per home (cost per unit) compared to £3,212 per home last year.



We borrow money to invest in your homes and build new ones. Some of the rent we receive goes to pay back the interest on money borrowed for current and future home investment.

£6



Rent loss

We set money aside to cover any rent or service charges we aren't able to collect. We collected 98.95% of rent due (£76.6 million out of £78.4 million).

£2





...through complaints and compliments

Telling us when we are getting it right through compliments is a great way to feed back to us so we can keep making sure we deliver an excellent customer experience.

You may have also got a survey from us, as we

Throughout the year, we received 222 compliments from you. The top three areas were about:

- repairs to your home
- how we deliver services in your neighbourhood
- the experience you have as a ForHousing tenant or customer

We love getting compliments but we also want to hear from you when services fall short so that we can put things right and learn.

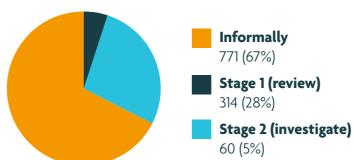
We treat any dissatisfaction from you as a form of complaint. We see this an opportunity to get valuable feedback to help improve the services you receive from us.

We received 1,341 expressions of dissatisfaction (complaints) from you about the following services.

Reason for complaint	No.	%
Repairs and maintenance	1,181	88%
Neighbourhood and tenancy management	80	6%
Reletting empty homes	31	2%
Community safety issues such as anti-social behaviour	18	1%
Property management	11	1%
Rent issues	10	1%
New homes being developed	4	<1%
Supported housing	3	<1%
Our call centre	3	<1%
Buying your home	1	<1%
	1,342	100%

The Tenants Complaints Panel carried out 51 Stage 2 review meetings where they made recommendations to us on how to resolve complaints.

How complaints were resolved



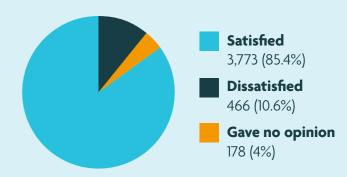
1,145 complaints were closed, including some open complaints from the previous year, and 48% of you were satisfied with the way we handled complaints (154 surveys were completed).

During 2021/22, the Housing Ombudsman investigated and made decisions on seven complaints escalated to them by tenants. Four had decisions of no maladministration, two had a decision of maladministration and one partial maladministration. These findings related to property condition, complaint handling and estate management.

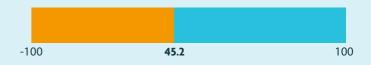
Listening and learning is important to us and helps to improve the services we deliver, so we will be publishing examples of our learning from complaints on the "Our performance" section of our website at www.forhousing.co.uk

...through surveys

We completed 4,417 surveys with you about services received. The graph below shows how satisfied you said you were:



We asked if you would recommend ForHousing to others (known as a Net Promoter score) and you gave us a score of 45.2. This is considered a 'good' score.



Net Promoter Score

Getting in touch

Your feedback is important.

If you have any comments or suggestions on this Annual Report, please get in touch with us.



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