

Bristol City Council Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders

2022/23



Inside:

Welcome	2
Managing tenancies	3
Repairs and improving your home	5
Rent management and finance	6
Understanding and responding to your needs	6
You said, we did...	7
Contact us	8
Useful Contacts	8
Get Involved	8

Welcome



Councillor Tom Renhard, Cabinet Member for Housing Delivery and Homes.

Welcome to the 2022/23 Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders, here you can find information about our performance over the last financial year from April 2022 to March 2023.

We have seen a lot of positive change taking place within social housing over this period that has strengthened the voice of residents, making sure landlords are taking concerns on board while making any changes necessary to keep residents safe. Resident safety remains our top priority. We checked the safety of our homes for compliance, making sure they were in line with new legislation. July 2023 saw

the publication of the new Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 which requires all social housing landlords to meet new standards. This will further improve housing services and will help to keep residents safe.

From April 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing will inspect all social housing landlords, which includes councils, every four years. We will be assessed against a new core set of consumer standards, which includes new tenant satisfaction measures.

Having better and more frequent inspections will bring improvements to the way we work, and this includes how we communicate with residents. While it is a busy and challenging time for housing, we welcome changes that will provide residents with a better service. One important change is our introduction of a dedicated building safety team to respond to resident queries.

We know demand for housing in Bristol is still rising so we

remain committed to building 1,000 new affordable homes a year. Since 2016, over 11,000 new homes have been built in Bristol including 2,563 new homes in the year to April 2022 which included 474 affordable homes, the most in more than a decade.

The council's new build programme aims to deliver more than 1,750 new homes for the city over the next five years as part of a planned investment of over £1.8 billion in building new council homes. We are currently on site at six locations building 195 new homes, and we are also acquiring 300 new homes from developers including Goram Homes. We have a further 280 council homes on various developments due to start on site in the next twelve months. To date 260 new homes have been completed.

As always, we welcome your feedback and we look forward to working with many more of you to improve services further.

Supporting Mill House

Our housing officers have been out in local areas talking to residents about issues in their communities and taking action to address concerns. An example of this is when residents at Mill House, a sheltered scheme in east Bristol, suffered from anti-social behaviour in their area, affecting both their safety and their homes.

In response, a housing officer set up a series of resident meetings. As well as anti-social behaviour, concerns were raised about rough sleepers getting into the block and sleeping under the stairs. There were also worries about fire safety following a fire at nearby Twinnell House.

Following these meetings, our street wise manager visited Mill House to provide information about the work they do to engage with people sleeping rough.

They left information and useful telephone numbers for residents to use. A local Police Community Support Officer also visited to provide information about how to stay safe, which residents found reassuring.

This was followed by a visit from a fire officer who gave a safety talk, including advice on clear corridors, the dangers of smoke inhalation and how quickly fire can spread.

Residents felt listened to and more reassured after speaking with council staff.

Managing tenancies

71% of tenants were satisfied with overall services provided by Bristol City Council.

1,012 empty properties were let.



During 2022/23, we acquired **5** new build homes from developers, and **10** homes (not new builds) were acquired for use as homeless move-on accommodation.



It took us **52.2** days on average to re-let a standard empty property, where no major repairs were needed.



86% of new tenants were satisfied with the overall lettings process.



95% of new tenancies lasted longer than one year.



We helped **38** households move to accommodation that was either already adapted or more suitable for adaptations (such as wet rooms and floor lifts) to better meet the needs of our tenants and also make better use of stock.

On March 31 2022 we had **351** empty properties intended for re-let.



As at April 1 2022:

- We manage **28,894** rented and leased homes across Bristol.
- We had **29,779** tenants and **2,368** leaseholders.
- In total, we estimate around **64,000** people live in the homes we manage. This is about **14%** of Bristol's population.
- Around **8,500** homes (tenants and leaseholders) receive a caretaking service.
- **94.9%** of site inspections judged our cleaning as acceptable and **89.7%** of our inspections found the standard of cleaning to be high.
- **78%** of tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- **64%** of tenants are satisfied that the communal areas around their home are kept safe, secure and well maintained.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour (ASB)

We responded to **1,317** cases of ASB.



44% of tenants were satisfied with the way Bristol City Council deals with ASB.



77 ASB cases related to hate crime.



1,411 new possible cases of breach of tenancy conditions. Examples include homes/gardens in poor condition or having unsuitable pets.



196 Tenancy fraud referrals were received (The fraud investigation team prevented **36** cases of tenancy fraud and abuse across the city. This included stopping fraudulent housing and right to buy applications, and a prosecution for someone subletting their property to someone else. Since 2010, more than **350** cases of fraud have been stopped).



Managing tenancies

Adaptations and services for older people



Do you know about the Housing Ombudsman Service?

As a resident of social housing you have a right to use the Housing Ombudsman Service when unhappy with how we have handled a complaint. They offer a free complaint resolution service and have recently been reformed to be given a more important role in housing.

You can also contact them for general advice about housing complaints and your rights when complaining. Their website has data and reports on complaints in social housing, including on Bristol City Council

www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

You can call them on 0300 111 3000 Monday to Friday, 9.15am to 5.15pm or email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Last year they asked all social landlords to look at how they currently handle complaints. We are pleased to find that we resolve most of your complaints at the first stage of our investigation, however we are aiming to improve how quickly we respond when things go wrong. We have published our 'self-assessment' at [Housing Ombudsman: Complaint Handling Code - bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk)

We always want to improve and learn from our mistakes. If you have any feedback about how we have handled a complaint or service we would love to hear from you <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/complaints-and-feedback/housing>

Complaints

Between April 2022 and March 2023:

- We handled **1,045** complaints
- We responded to **75%** of complaints within our 15 working day target
- **89.4%** of complaints were resolved at Stage 1 of our complaints process, with 9.8% progressing to Stage 2 and 0.9% reaching the Ombudsman stage
- **53.3%** of complaints were partly or fully upheld.

We always want to improve and learn from our mistakes. If you have any feedback about how we have handled a complaint or service we would love to hear from you.

www.bristol.gov.uk/complaints-and-feedback/housing

Repairs and improving your home

Repairs

- **88%** of appointments were kept.
- **88.3%** of repairs were completed in one visit.
- The average time to complete a standard repair (for our internal workforce) was **32.38** calendar days.
- **90%** of emergency repairs were attended within 24 hours.
- **69%** of tenants were satisfied with the quality of their home.
- **75%** of tenants were satisfied with the way Bristol City Council deals with repairs and maintenance.
- **92%** of tenants who received a repair, were satisfied with the overall repairs service.
- **89%** of tenants who responded to us were satisfied with the external repairs to their home.



94.9% of our homes met the government's Decent Homes Standard.



781 new boilers and/or heating systems were installed.



871 homes had their exteriors repaired and/or painted.

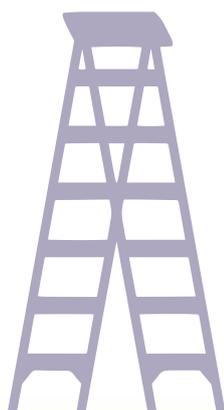


 **99.94%** of properties with working gas supply had a gas safety check in the last year.

603 new kitchens were installed.



88% of tenants who responded to us were satisfied with their new kitchen installation.



Rent management and finance

There is no funding from the rest of the council or central government to cover the cost of managing, maintaining and improving council housing. Most of our budget comes from the rents and service charges we receive from you. This can only be spent on Bristol City Council homes and related services.

Rent management

- **12%** of tenants had more than seven week's arrears.
- **99.08%** of rent was collected.
- Our Welfare Rights and Monetary Advice team helped **537** residents, including **226** council tenants to access **£2.84m** ongoing annual benefit income and **£1.81m** in one off lump sum benefit payments.

What we spent:

	2021-22	2022-23
Repairs and maintenance	£33.9m	£37.3m
Managing tenancies	£30.1m	£38.6m
Improvements to existing housing stock	£29.4m	£33.4m
Interest on borrowing	£11.2m	£11.4m
Special services (e.g. caretaking, services for older people)	£12m	£14.8m
New builds and acquisitions	£9.9m	£20.3m
Other	£1m	£1.6m
Total	£127.5m	£157.4m



Understanding and responding to your needs

Council tenants represent **14%** of Bristol's population. Our tenants are a diverse range of people and reflect the diversity of our city:



You said, we did...

Looking back to 2021/22

We carried out 1,492 resident satisfaction surveys across Bristol and this is what you told us:

- Improving and maintaining the quality of the homes was the most important factor for satisfaction. The second most important issue was property condition, including damp, mould and condensation.
- Other important factors were: more visibility from the council in local communities, a need for better tenant engagement and communication.
- Safety and security at home, specifically door and window security as well as the communal areas within blocks.

Improvements to how we respond to complaints of damp and mould

- We have developed a whole house approach to tackling repairs, including damp and mould. This has already started and includes a new damp and mould policy as well as processes for monitoring residents' experiences. In 2023, we will see more training for operatives, better property repair surveys and further stock condition surveys to help us identify damp and mould issues more quickly.
- Residents can tell us about damp and mould issues in their homes, by phone, through our website and via our telephone satisfaction surveys.

Improvements to building and fire safety

- In total, 1,088 properties were made safer following essential fire safety works to entrance doors and compartmentation. In 2023, we will continue with our programme of fire safety works as well as providing advice and support to any residents concerned about safety within their homes.

Improvements to visibility and communication

- We have improved our communication and visibility across high rise blocks following resident concerns about fire safety. We launched a new freephone number (0800 694 0184) for residents to report any fire safety concerns and we worked with Avon Fire and Rescue Service to provide information about fire safety in buildings and homes. We also held local face to face drop-in sessions with residents across 32 high rise blocks in Bristol. These events gave residents the opportunity to speak directly with housing officers, repairs staff and senior managers.
- In 2022, we launched a new home ownership team (formerly known as leasehold and right to buy). Our new home ownership manager has since produced a 'home ownership action plan' following feedback from colleagues and leaseholders to improve communication. The team holds quarterly leaseholder forum meetings and there is now a dedicated duty team to answer telephone calls.
- Our housing officers are out in local areas more frequently, visiting new tenants and undertaking tenancy reviews. During 2023, we've been increasing our programme of estate grading and inspections while working with local residents and partners to maintain areas and make improvements for local communities.
- In 2023/24, we will continue to improve communication and engagement with residents, particularly around anti-social behaviour and resident safety.

Looking forward

In 2022/23, we continued with our citywide quarterly telephone surveys. In total, 1,989 residents took part, and this is what you told us:

- Improve communication with residents in relation to complaints and requests for service
- Improve the time it takes to complete repairs
- Improve the way we interact with leaseholders

We are listening to your feedback so that we can address the issues that matter to you.

Contact us



- **62.5%** of tenants feel that Bristol City Council is easy to contact
- We received **233,289** calls last year
- **84%** were answered
- The average wait for a call to be answered was **13 minutes 28 seconds**

www

You can access many of our services anytime quickly online, including:

- View your rent account balance
- Make a rent payment online
- Apply for a mutual exchange, a parking permit and much more!
- Go to: www.bristol.gov.uk/councilhousing
- The Building Safety Team on tel: **0800 694 0184** or Email: buildingsafety@bristol.gov.uk

Get Involved

The Housing Scrutiny Panel lets council tenants and leaseholders have a say and influence services that relate to the management of their homes. The panel are a small group of tenants and leaseholders who work as a team to improve services for all council tenants and leaseholders.

For more information visit:

www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/housing-scrutiny-panel

If you're interested in getting involved visit:

www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/tenant-participation-form

Useful Contacts

Caretaking

www.bristol.gov.uk/caretaking

Complaints or feedback

www.bristol.gov.uk/complaints

Email: complaints.feedback@bristol.gov.uk

Tel: 0117 922 2723
(Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm)

Emergency repairs

Please call the Emergency Control Centre:

8.30am to 6pm (office hours):
Tel: 0117 922 2200 (Option 1)

6pm to 8.30am (out of hours):
Tel: 0117 922 2050

Textphone: 0117 922 3892

Estate management

www.bristol.gov.uk/counciltenants

Tel: 0117 922 2200 (Option 4)

Housing benefit and council tax reduction

www.bristol.gov.uk/benefits

Report repairs

www.bristol.gov.uk/reportarepair

Tel: 0117 922 2200 (Option 1)

Rents and housing payments

www.bristol.gov.uk/payrent

If you are struggling to pay, call:
0117 922 2200 (Option 3)
(Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6pm)

Manage your tenancy online:
www.bristol.gov.uk/tenantaccount

Smell gas?

Report gas immediately to National Grid Gas Emergency Service.

Tel: 0800 111 999

Tenants energy advice

www.cse.org.uk/bristoltea

Tenant service online

View your rent account balance, make a payment or request services

www.bristol.gov.uk/councilhousing

Bristol Council Housing

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, audio tape, large print, easy English, BSL video or CD rom or plain text, please contact: 0117 352 5935

[facebook.com/bristolcouncilhousing](https://www.facebook.com/bristolcouncilhousing)