

Bristol City Council

Annual Report for Tenants

April 2015 – March 2016



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Welcome

Steven Barrett and Mary Ryan,
Service Directors, Housing Delivery

Our achievements

Welcome to the 2016 Housing Services annual report to tenants. In it we share information about our performance between April 2015 and March 2016. Over the last year we are pleased to have completed the first four homes of our new build programme and are delighted to have over 70 more homes under construction across Bristol. As part of our commitment to improve services we have recruited more housing officers and made it easier for tenants to access and request our services online. Tenants can now pay rent and book repairs via the council website (www.bristol.gov.uk/councilhousing), 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week - a much faster and more convenient alternative to phoning us or travelling to a customer service point.

Priorities – 2016-17

As you may know, the council is facing challenging financial pressures. For housing services this will mean working hard to make sure we spend and invest wisely over the next few years, whilst continuing to maintain excellent services to you within limited budgets and resources. Our priorities include:

- Working to make the best use of our housing stock and improve our relet times, to help meet housing need.
- Encouraging tenants to pay their rent and reduce rent arrears.
- Reviewing what we spend on improving existing homes, and identifying cost savings.
- Improving the way we work, using technology to ensure we are as efficient as possible.
- Reviewing our tenant involvement strategy to improve the way we listen to and involve tenants.

Key Facts

(as at 1 April 2016)

- We house around **62,000** people - about 14% of Bristol's population.
- We house **31,665** tenants and their families in **26,893** properties across the city, and also provide services for **1,953** leaseholders.

Our Tenants



White British
[78% of total Bristol population, 2011 census]

Black / Minority Ethnicity
[17%]

4% 5%

White Other
[5%]

Unknown / Prefer not to say [0%]

- **20%** of tenants identify as disabled.
- **24%** of our tenants are aged 65+.

The ethnic make-up of our tenants is broadly representative of the population of Bristol.

Understanding and responding to your needs



74%

of respondents to our annual tenant survey said that they are satisfied with the service we provide as a landlord. [2014-15: 79%]

- **584** major adaptations were made to tenants' homes to help meet their needs.
- Our Support to Older People team responded to **1,181 emergency call outs** from elderly or vulnerable tenants who receive this service.
- **96%** of response teams arrived within their 30 minute target.



It is now also possible to view your rent account balance and report non-urgent repairs online. This is quicker and simpler for you. 750 repairs were reported using the internet, when our online service became available (January-March 2016).

Our Citizen Services department has been improved. Their achievements won the Silver-Gilt medal at the National Contact Centre Improvement Awards, and the Best Business Improvement Strategy prize at the South West Contact Centre Awards.

Customer Service

- We received 295,760 calls across all our services. 71% were answered. [2014-15 357,666. 72%].
- In our recent tenant satisfaction survey you told us that on some occasions we were taking too long to answer your calls. During 2015-16 we gave our Citizen Services team extra training to resolve your problems straight away, saving you time.
- 61% of tenants are satisfied that we listen to their views and act on them. [2014-15: 56%]
- We received 628 complaints. 51% were resolved within our target of 15 days. [2014-15: 43%]



"It's good that people have helped me on the computer. I can go home and do this with my family now I have the website link."

(Customer feedback)

Repairs and improving your home

Repairs

91% were satisfied with how we dealt with their most recent repair. [2014-15: 91%]

96% were satisfied they could book a convenient appointment time for a repair.

88% of appointments were kept by us as scheduled.

The average time to complete a standard repair was

7 working days.

[2014-15: 12 days]

97% of new tenants were satisfied with the quality of their new home. [2014-15: 87%]



Improving your Home

82% satisfied with the overall quality of their home. [2014-15: 80%]

93% of our homes met the government's Decent Homes Standard [2014-15: 94%]

1687 new heating systems installed.

874 homes rewired.

1313 new kitchens installed.

On average, **97%** of people satisfied with planned works done to their home. [2014-15: 97%]

Report a repair online



The quickest way to book a non-urgent repair is online at www.bristol.gov.uk/ReportARRepair

We introduced this facility in early 2016:

- 1. Check** if your repair can be logged online and whether you may be charged for it.
- 2. Report.** Click the 'Report a Repair' button and follow the booking sequence. Remember to provide us with as much information as possible.
- 3. Make a date.** For some repairs, such as those in communal areas you won't need to book a time, but if the repair is for your property please book a time and date convenient to you.



If your repair is an **emergency** always report it by phone.

If you're calling between 6pm and 8.30am then you need to call the Emergency Control Centre:

- 8.30am to 6pm (office hours): 0117 922 2200 (option 1)
- 6pm to 8.30am (out of hours): 0117 922 2050
- Textphone: 0117 922 3892

Managing your tenancy

Managing Tenancies



vacant properties were let to new tenants.



74% of new tenants felt they had a successful start to their new tenancy.
[2014-15: 85%]



On average, it took us **49 days** to relet a void properties.
[2014-15: 43 days]

95% of new tenancies lasted longer than one year.

1526 cases of breach of tenancy conditions were investigated.

Working with social services we gave extra support to **434 vulnerable tenants**, at risk of losing their tenancies.



If you are looking to move to a smaller home, we may be able to help. Our dedicated Making Best Use of Stock Team help you apply for rehousing, find the right home, and with the financial costs of moving.

Last year **141** tenants downsized their homes. We gave assistance to 57 of them.

Rent



78% were satisfied with their rent as value for money.
[2014-15: 73%]

71% were satisfied with their service charge as value for money. [2014-15: 73%]

2006 tenants were in arrears of over £1000.
[2014-15: 1812 tenants.]

58 tenants were evicted because of rent arrears.

Rent is a priority bill for tenants and not paying your rent puts your home at risk. If tenants have problems paying their rent they can call us.

We help tenants work out a plan to get back on track, including putting you in touch with free, specialist advice on debt, benefits and budgeting.

83% of tenants are satisfied with our advice on managing finances and paying rent, up from 73% last year.

Following a new Government policy, we are

reducing your rents

by 1% in 2016-17

Launched in 2016, our new online **tenants account** gives you easy access to account balances and payments.

To access your online tenant account visit our website at www.bristol.gov.uk/tenantaccount



Safe, clean and green neighbourhoods

Key Facts (as at 1 April 2016)

79% of all tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. [2014-15: 81%]

8708 of our tenants receive a caretaking service. **95%** of site inspections in blocks rated the cleaning done by our caretakers as satisfactory. [2014-15: 99%]

Dealing with anti-social behaviour

- **2495** cases of ASB reported to us.
- There were **155 incidents of hate crime** reported to us. We investigated every case. [2014-15: 176]
- **59% of tenants were satisfied** with the way their ASB or hate-crime complaint was dealt with. [2014-15: 67%]
- **11 tenants were evicted for ASB.**



We know we can improve the way we deal with anti-social behaviour and we are working hard to do so. In the last year we recruited additional Housing Officers and are already noticing improvements to the service we provide.



To buy a reconditioned Windows 7 computer from just £50, contact
Bristol Computer Reuse

For further details contact:

Email: info@bristolcomputerreuse.org | Phone: 0117 3706 375

Visit: www.bristolcomputerreuse.org

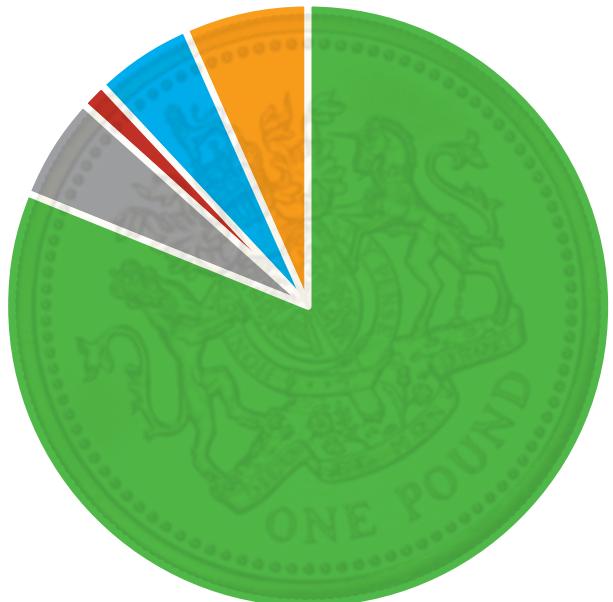


Finance

We receive no funding from the council or central government. Most of our money comes from the rents and service charges we receive from you. This can only be spent on Bristol's Council Housing.

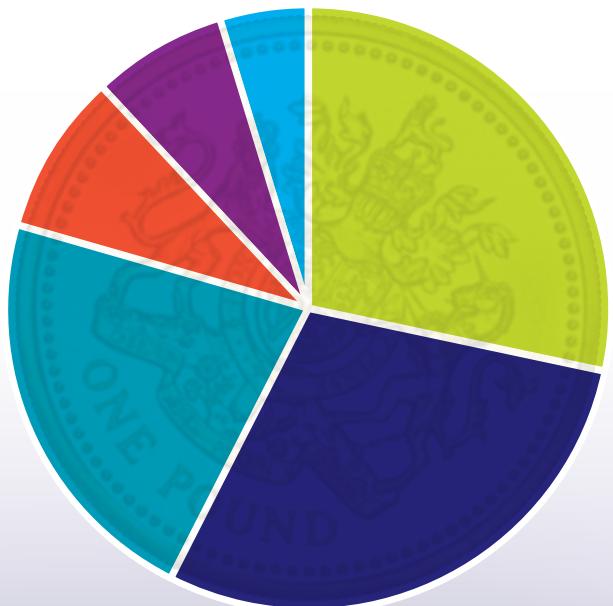
Where the money comes from:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Rent: | £115.9m |
| Service Charge: | £8.0m |
| Other (e.g. bank interest): | £0.5m |
| Usable Right-to-Buy receipts: | £7.6m |
| Other Sales: | £9.3m |
| Debts written off: | £-1.8m |
| Total | £139.5m |



What we spend it on:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Repairs and Maintenance | £36.3m |
| Improvements and Adapts to existing housing stock | £36.8m |
| Management Costs | £27.8m |
| Debt Servicing | £11.2m |
| Special Services (e.g. Caretaking or Services to Older People) | £9.1m |
| New Build Program and Acquisitions | £5.8m |
| Total | £127.0m |



Annual surplus: £12.5m

Last year our income was bigger than our spending. This annual surplus will be carried forward and will be spent on maintaining council homes into the future.

Getting Involved

There are several ways you can get involved to help us improve services:

- Join our Housing Management Board or Housing Scrutiny Panel, www.bristol.gov.uk/hsp
- Attend a Service User Group
- Take part in a caretaking site inspection where you live.

If you care about what happens near you, your Neighbourhood Partnership can help. For contacts, toolkits, and info about small grants, visit www.bristol.gov.uk/neighbourhoodpartnerships

If you've got an idea for something you think we can do better or you'd like to get involved in how we manage, maintain and improve your homes contact us on **0117 352 1444** or email tpu@bristol.gov.uk



Do you have a view?

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

Designed by Bristol Design, Bristol City Council, BD8568

Ever wondered how decisions are made and who's doing what in your neighbourhood?



Be part of it

- To find out how you can get involved in your Neighbourhood Partnership visit:
www.bristol.gov.uk/neighbourhoodpartnerships
or call: **0117 922 2329**

Working together to improve our Neighbourhoods

