

Bristol City Council Annual Report for Tenants

April 2016 – March 2017



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Welcome



Mary Ryan, Service Director, Housing Services

Our achievements

Welcome to the 2017 Housing Services annual report to tenants. Here we share information about our performance in the last financial year between April 2016 and March 2017.

Housing is in short supply in Bristol and providing more affordable homes is a key priority for the city council. This year, we completed 17 new council homes and started construction of a further 50.

We have also been working hard to reduce the number of our homes which are left empty. Where vacant council homes need extensive renovation work we have started making them available to be used for emergency housing or collaborated with other housing organisations to bring them back into use.

We remain committed to providing a great service to our tenants: continuing the roll-out of our online services and ensuring that we are focussing on what is important to residents.

We've also recently said goodbye to Steve Barrett, Service Director for Housing Services. Throughout the years that Steve and I have shared the role, Steve has been a good colleague and friend. He's always championed better services for tenants and will be greatly missed.

Priorities 2017–18

- **New Homes:** We will build further new council homes over the coming year.
- **Best Use of Stock:** Last year we significantly reduced the number of empty council homes, we want to make sure as many of our homes are in use as possible.
- **Efficiency:** Rents are being reduced by 1% a year until 2019 after a decision by the government. This means we have to think hard about how we spend and invest, so that we can continue to deliver a good service to you.
- **Feedback:** We value tenant's opinions and ideas. We want the services we provide to meet your priorities, so we are working to improve how we involve you and listen to your views.



New Council Homes in Barton Hill

Key facts (as at 1 April 2017)

- **31,403** tenants
- **27,361** homes
- In total we provide homes to an estimated **62,000** people
- **2,010** leaseholders lease **1,568** flats from us
- **74%** of respondents to our annual survey said that they are satisfied with the service we provide – a slight dip in the 77% satisfaction level from 2015–16

Understanding and responding to your needs

Our tenants



White
British



Black /
Minority
Ethnicity



White
other



Unknown
/prefer not
to say

- **24%** of our tenants are aged 65+



- **20%** of tenants identify as disabled



- **684** major adaptations were made to tenants' homes to help meet their needs

Services to Older People

- The Services To Older People team responded to **1,056** emergency call-outs from elderly or vulnerable tenants.
- **91%** of response teams arrived within their 30 minute target. (2015-16: 96%)



Contacting us



- **55%** of tenants are satisfied that we listen to their views and act on them. (2015-16: 61%)
- We received **783** complaints last year. (2015-16: 628)
- **52%** of complaints were resolved within our target of 15 days. (2015-16: 51%)

It is now possible to view your rent account balance over the internet, or to arrange an appointment for a non-urgent repair online. This is quicker and simpler for you.



Around 1,200 tenants have added tenant services to their online Bristol account and 7,211 repairs requests were made online last year.

See our website
[www.bristol.gov.uk/
councilhousing](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/councilhousing)
for more details

Repairs and improving your home

Repairs

- **94%** were satisfied with how we dealt with their repair. (2015–16: 91%)
- **96%** were satisfied they could book a convenient appointment time for a repair. (2015–16: 96%)
- **89%** of appointments were kept by us as scheduled. (2015–16: 88%)
- The average time to complete a standard repair was **7 working days**. (2015–16: 7 days)
- **97%** of new tenants were satisfied with the quality of their new home. (2015–16: 97%)



We are now much faster at repairing vacant homes to get them ready for new tenants.

The average time to complete minor repairs during 2016–17 was **24** days, down from 35 days the year before.

Where the property required major repairs the average repair time was **45** days, down from 51 days. This means we have fewer empty council houses.

Improving your home

- **83%** satisfied with the overall quality of their home. (2015–16: 82%)
- **94%** of our homes met the government's Decent Homes Standard. (2015–16: 93%)
- **1353** new heating systems installed.
- **1829** homes had their exteriors repaired and/or painted.
- **1184** new kitchens were installed.
- On average, **95%** of people were satisfied with planned improvements made to their home. (2015–16: 97%)

We received the Onsite Bristol Employer of the Year award, recognising our work to recruit more repairs apprentices who are female or from ethnic minorities.



Managing your tenancy

Rent

Following a new Government policy, we are

reducing your rent by 1%
every year until 2019



- **80%** were satisfied with their rent as value for money. (2015–16: 78%)
- **72%** were satisfied with their service charge as value for money. (2015–16: 71%)
- **12%** of tenants had more than 7 week's arrears. (2015–16: 12%)
- **56** tenants were evicted because of rent arrears.
- **81%** satisfied with advice on managing finances and paying rent and service charges. (2015–16: 83%)

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.

Managing tenancies



1484 empty properties were let.

80% of new tenants felt they had a successful start to their new tenancy. (2015-16: 74%)



On average, it took us **44** days to re-let a void property that didn't need major repairs. (2015–16: 49 days)



97% of new tenancies lasted longer than one year. (2015–16: 96%)

We gave extra support to **641** tenants who were at risk of losing their tenancy.

Our 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



If you are looking to move to a smaller home, we may be able to help.

Our dedicated team can help assist you in finding the right home and take you through the options available to you. Last year we supported **66** tenants with a move to more suitable accommodation.

To find out more, email MBUS@bristol.gov.uk



Safe, clean and green neighbourhoods

- **79%** of tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. (2015–16: 79%)
- **8497** homes receive a caretaking service.
- **95%** of site inspections judged the standard of caretaking to be at least satisfactory. (2015–16: 95%)
- **85%** of site inspections judged the caretaking to be of a high standard. (2015–16: 80%)



Fire safety

We have been spending £2million per year for the last five years on improving fire safety in our blocks of flats and we will continue to spend at least £1million per year for the next ten years.

The work is mainly around compartmentation and replacing fire doors to modern standards. We have worked closely with Avon Fire and Rescue who have endorsed our fire safety procedures.



Dealing with anti-social behaviour

- **2,633** cases of ASB reported to us.
- **60%** of tenants were satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with. (2015–16: 59%)
- **9** tenants were evicted for ASB.
- **2,424** cases of breach of tenancy conditions were investigated.
- **247** cases of possible tenancy fraud were investigated, resulting in 42 homes being recovered.



Finance

We receive no funding from the rest of 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 City Council Housing.

What we spent:

	Improvements to existing housing stock	£40m
	Repairs and Maintenance	£35m
	Supervision and Management	£32m
	Debt Servicing	£11m
	New Builds and Acquisitions	£9m
	Special Services (e.g. Caretaking or Services to Older People)	£8m
	Bad debts	£2m
	Total	£139m



Where the money comes from:

	Rent:	£114m
	Service Charge:	£8m
	Other (e.g. bank interest):	£2m
	Usable Capital Receipts (e.g. from Right-to-buy sales) :	£15m
	Total	£139m



Tenant Involvement – Ways to get involved!

Do you have a view?

You can get involved and help us improve the service we offer in a variety of ways.

These include:

- Taking part in surveys and consultations
- Attending a workshop or focus groups
- Joining one of our formal groups or panels

Check out all the ways you can get involved at:

www.bristol.gov.uk/housing/tenant-participation-ways-to-get-involved

Or if you care about what happens in your area, for contacts, toolkits and small grants, visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/neighbourhoodpartnerships

You can also follow us on [Bristol Tenant Participation Facebook](#)



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



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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

