

Bristol City Council Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders

2021 - 2022



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Welcome



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

Welcome to the 2021/22 Housing and Landlord Services annual report for tenants and leaseholders. Here we share information about our performance in the last financial year between April 2021 and March 2022.

There was a strong focus on hearing resident voices and using your views to shape both our services and how we spend our money. In this report you can read more about changes brought about by the first of our 'Big Housing Conversations' that focussed on investment in our council homes.

You can also read about how your feedback about services has been used to shape improvements. Last year resident feedback and ideas

were the driving force behind our staff training programme which included equality and inclusion training and customer excellence training. In response to your feedback, we also launched a new rapid response team to help us respond to communal repairs more promptly and our housing officer duty team is now the first point of contact (instead of our call centre) for residents reporting anti-social behaviour.

We always welcome feedback from residents and look forward to meeting and working with many more of you. To find out about our resident groups and meetings visit [Tenant participation](#): ways to get involved - bristol.gov.uk

The Big Housing Conversation – what's happening

Between October 2021 – March 2022 we held several Big Housing Conversations with residents. We specifically asked council tenants and leaseholders for their views on how we should invest in council homes and also how tenants and leaseholders wanted to be involved and have their say about housing. Here is an update on what we are doing in response to your feedback and ideas.

Investing in council homes – our plan.

During the Big Housing Conversation you said that you would like us to make improvements to our homes.

We are in year one of our ambitious 30 year business plan.

This year we have...

- **released £500k** to start a programme of bathroom replacements during 2022/23, increasing to £3m in 2023/24. Following the codesign with residents, the bathroom specification is being finalised and brought to decision makers for approval in Autumn 2022.
- **allocated £2.05m** for improvements to communal areas, estates and blocks across the city during 2023-2024. We are currently engaging with colleagues and residents to determine the areas and improvements that are of greatest priority for these funds.
- **allocated £80m** to make homes more energy efficient and ensure all homes reach a minimum of EPC C by 2030.

You can read more on page 7.

Managing tenancies

73% of tenants were satisfied with overall services provided by Bristol City Council (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey)

1,023 empty properties were let



57 New builds were completed, which include **5** Preparing for Adulthood supported housing properties and **8** supported Homeless Move-on units. We also added **5** New Homes to our Housing Stock due to conversions



It took us **46.5** days on average to re-let a standard empty property, where no major repairs were needed. (2020-21: 50 days)



87% of new tenants were satisfied with the overall lettings process
(Monthly transactional survey)



95% of new tenancies lasted longer than one year. (2020-21: 95%)



We helped **30** 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.

We had **288** empty properties intended for re-let on March 31 2022



As at April 1 2022:

- We manage **28,569** rented and leased homes across Bristol.
- We had **30,264** tenants and **2,291** 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.
- 97.2%** of site inspections judged our cleaning as acceptable and **92.9%** of our inspections found the standard of cleaning to be high. (2020/21 99.7 and 94.5)
- 78%** of tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey)
- 68%** of tenants are satisfied that the communal areas around their home are kept safe, secure and well maintained (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey)

Dealing with anti-social behaviour (ASB)

We responded to **1,849** cases of ASB



59% of tenants were satisfied with the way Bristol City Council deals with anti-social behaviour (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey)



100 ASB cases related to hate crime.



1,294 new possible cases of breach of tenancy conditions. Examples include homes/gardens in poor condition or having unsuitable pets.

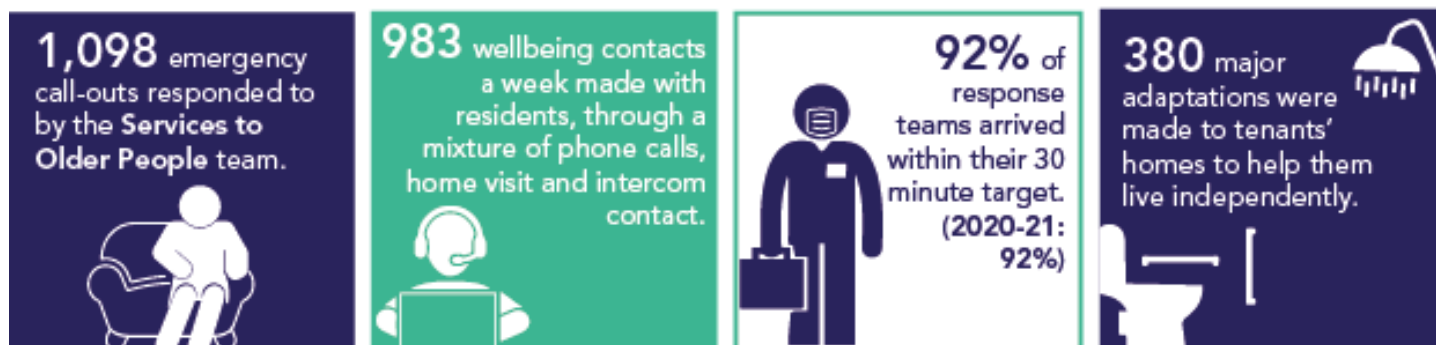


239 cases of possible tenancy fraud were investigated, which resulted in us getting **31** council properties back. (a positive outcome could be a person removed from the housing register due to a fraudulent application or a fraudulent right to buy application cancelled).



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

At least once a year, we complete a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and you can see our most recent self-assessment here [Housing Ombudsman: Complaint Handling Code - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/housing-ombudsman-complaint-handling-code)

What have we improved?

Since our last self-assessment, we have:

- rolled out a training programme for all officers who handle housing complaints
- established a quality audit programme and conducted two audits of complaints
- established a working group to create a formal framework for learning from complaints.

Complaints

Between April 2021 and March 2022:

- We handled **868** complaints
- We responded to **85.4%** of complaints within our 15 working day target
- **91%** of complaints were resolved at Stage 1 of our complaints process, with 8% progressing to Stage 2 and 1% reaching the Ombudsman stage
- **47.8%** of complaints were partly or fully upheld

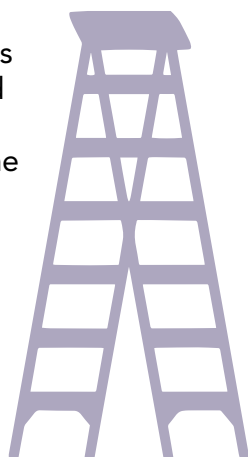
We always want to improve and learn from our mistakes. If you have any feedback about how we have handled a complaint or service we would love to hear from you.

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

Repairs and improving your home

Repairs

- **89%** of appointments were kept.
 - **87%** of repairs were completed in one visit.
 - The average time to complete a standard repair (for our internal workforce) was **13** calendar days.
 - **93%** of emergency repairs were attended within 24 hours.
 - **69%** of tenants were satisfied with the quality of their home (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey)
 - **62%** of tenants were satisfied with the way Bristol City Council deals with repairs and maintenance (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey).
 - **91%** of tenants who received a repair, were satisfied with the overall repairs service (Monthly transactional survey).
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- **88%** of tenants who responded to us were satisfied with the external repairs to their home



Improving your home

95.4% of our homes met the government's Decent Homes Standard (2019-20: 93.8%)



717 new boilers and/or heating systems were installed.



1,711 homes had their exteriors repaired and/or painted.



99.7% of properties with working gas supply had a gas safety check in the last year. (2020-21: 99.5%).

202 new kitchens were installed.



99% of tenants who responded to us were satisfied with their new kitchen installation



Rent management and finance

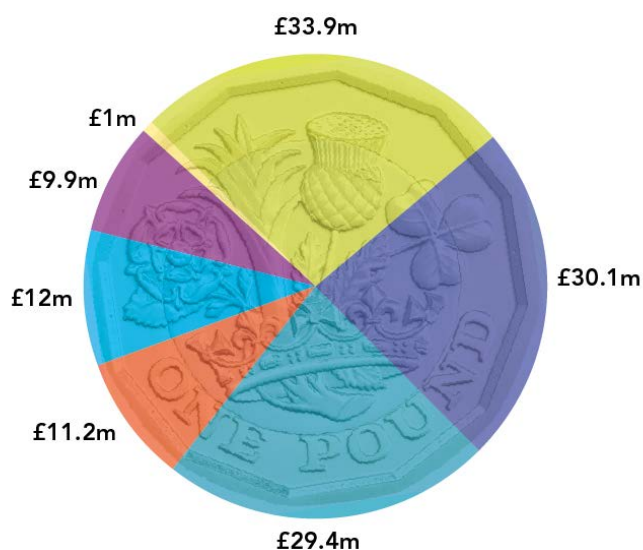
There is no funding from the rest of the council or central government to cover the cost of managing, maintaining and improving council housing. Most of our money comes from the rents and service charges we receive from you. This can only be spent on Bristol City Council homes and related services.

Rent management

- **13%** of tenants had more than seven week's arrears
- **99.57%** of rent was collected (2020-21 98.47%)
- Our Welfare Rights and Monetary Advice team helped **487** Bristol residents, including **212** council tenants to access **£3,02m** ongoing annual benefit income and **£1,54m** in one off lump sum benefit payments.

What we spent:

	2020-21	2021-22
Repairs and maintenance	£31.4m	£33.9m
Managing tenancies	£30m	£30.1m
Improvements to existing housing stock	£21.6m	£29.4m
Interest on borrowing	£11.2m	£11.2m
Special services (e.g. caretaking, services to older people)	£9.8m	£12m
New builds and acquisitions	£17m	£9.9m
Other	£2m	£1m
Total	£123m	£127.5m



Understanding and responding to your needs

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



The Big Housing Conversation - Listening to your views

In 2019 you said: there should be more opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to get involved

We did:

- In 2022 we surveyed over 2,000 residents to ask their views about tenant and leaseholder participation and what needed to be improved
- We commissioned the national Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to assess how well we meet national tenant engagement standards
- We continued our comprehensive resident satisfaction survey programme, where we speak to residents via telephone to get their feedback.

In 2021 during the Big Housing Conversation you also said:

- Resident involvement means communication, listening and acting on your views, working together and improving local areas
- Repairs, anti social behaviour, improvements to residential blocks and rent/service charge were your top areas of interest
- Personal commitments, health issues and a lack of confidence in the process were barriers that prevent you getting involved
- You prefer to find out about opportunities to get involved via newsletter, email bulletin, text or face to face
- In return for getting involved you want feedback about how your involvement has made a difference, out of pocket expenses and training to build your confidence to get involved.

Our next steps are to:

- Plan a series of co-design workshops with residents and colleagues to create new/improved activities that helps increase tenants' involvement with housing and landlord services
- Find better ways to promote resident engagement and ensure the tenant voice is communicated in the right way
- Prepare for new tenant satisfaction measures that will come into force in April 2023.

Responding to residents who took part in telephone surveys

You said:

- Communicate sooner and more frequently when we report and experience anti-social behaviour
- Get communal repairs done much quicker
- (New tenants said) provide better advice and support when we're moving in.

We did:

- We now have a dedicated housing officer duty team who residents can speak to when reporting anti-social behaviour. The duty officers provide general advice about what action might be possible and if appropriate, make referrals to support agencies such as SARI or Next Link. The case is then passed through to a local housing officer who manages the case and takes any action. Anyone reporting new cases will usually be contacted on the day the report was made.
- Residents reporting anti-social behaviour will receive updates using their preferred method of communication, text, email, phone call, and receive regular updates throughout the case.
- We now have a rapid response team who provide a prompt repairs service to improving the look and feel of communal spaces in and around our high and low rise flats. The jobs the team undertake include replacing broken paving slabs, cutting back bushes, replacing broken guttering, repairing communal fencing. Repairs relating to health and safety are usually completed within a 24 hours of being reported.
- We have a new referral process in place, to help support new tenants with setting up their new homes. Citizen advisors in our Customer Service Point can support new tenants with applications for furniture, claims for Universal Credit (Housing Costs); access to mobile data; change of address for utilities and much more.

Although we have more work to do, we are proud to be moving in a positive direction for residents. Our tenant satisfaction scores for listening and acting on resident views have improved from 54% in 2020/21 to 62% in 2022.

Contact us



- We received **211,009** calls last year (2020-21 197,069)
- **87%** were answered (87% 2020-21)
- The average wait for a call to be answered was **7 mins 26 secs** (2020-21 7 mins 01 secs)
- **68%** of tenants feel that Bristol City Council is easy to deal with (STAR Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey)

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

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

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

Bristol Council Housing



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