



As a council service, we understand that strong governance isn't just about the processes in place to support tenants and invest in our housing stock. It's also about the people who feed into our decisions and help us make sure we're making the best decisions for our tenants.

2023-24

Annual Report

Homes & Neighbourhoods

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Introduction

The Annual Report covers April 2023 to March 2024, providing an insight into our operations and giving tenants, leaseholders, staff, councillors, and stakeholders an honest look into what we do and how we do it.

As a local authority, we aspire to the best possible service standards our resources can provide, whilst also meeting the standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing. These consumer standards are:

- **Safety and Quality Standard**
- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard**
- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard**
- **Tenancy Standard.**

We have separated this annual report into sections covering these standards to help reflect our work. As a social landlord, Kirklees Council works hard to improve our services to improve the customer experience and meet our published service standards.

Kirklees is aware that the council housing service needs to improve the condition of its homes, in particular standards on fire safety, damp, mould, and condensation for the council's housing stock.

In response, we continue to work hard to ensure our homes are safe and of a decent standard for all tenants living in council housing. This remains one of our priorities for 2024-25 and beyond.



Our governance

We continually work alongside the Council's Cabinet, elected members, the Homes & Neighbourhoods Improvement Board and our Tenant Led Panel, who provide scrutiny, challenge and advice across all our housing services.



Portfolio Holder

Councillor Moses Crook

Looking back at the last year, it's clear that Homes & Neighbourhoods are committed to investing in your homes and communities. Through improving the safety of our housing stock, offering tailored support programmes, and building a stronger sense of community, we've started to better the quality of life for all our tenants.

This year has seen tremendous efforts from our teams to carry out more energy-efficient practices wherever possible, invest in our housing both old and new, review and enhance our current ways of working, improve our engagement within communities and our support for tenants.

We've launched new service standards based on your tenancy agreement – but with clearer explanations of the services we provide, your responsibilities as a tenant, and what you can expect from us as a landlord. These standards also provide you with an opportunity to tell us how well we're delivering our services, and where we need to improve performance. I'd encourage you to read them, if you haven't already. As your landlord, we want to hear from you!

This year we can't shy away from the fact that, along with a lot of positives, we've also had some challenges along the way. We've unfortunately received a large volume of complaints from tenants for various reasons, and have taken the opportunity to review and improve our ways of working – and, most importantly, to learn from our previous mistakes to reduce the number of complaints moving forward.

We also received a notice from the Regulator of Social Housing in March 2024, regarding the number of outstanding cases we have for fire safety and damp, mould and condensation. To address this, we've recruited more staff and reviewed – and will continue to monitor – the processes we have in place to bring down the backlog of cases as quickly as possible. From what I've seen so far, I'm positive that the momentum our teams have built to address the number of outstanding cases, and our ongoing collaboration with the Regulator, will continue to have a positive impact on our performance and remove the notice in due course.

This report is a snapshot of our efforts, and demonstrates our ambitions to be an excellent social landlord that consistently delivers the highest possible standards of service. We have plenty to look forward to in Homes & Neighbourhoods for the 2024 and 2025, and I'm looking forward to being able to share more progress with you over the next year.

“Homes & Neighbourhoods are committed to investing in your homes and communities.”

Chair of Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board

Robin Lawler



I have now been the Chair of the Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board for over a year, and I'm proud of the progress we've made since last year's report, especially in addressing critical challenges such as fire safety and the issues of damp, mould and condensation. The feedback and involvement from our Tenant Led Panel have been invaluable as we work to improve the quality of council housing in Kirklees.

We've seen significant achievements, from developing new energy-efficient homes and bringing long-standing empty properties back into use, to expanding environmental improvement projects across our communities. These efforts reflect our commitment to creating safer and healthier homes for tenants. Moving forward, we remain dedicated to building on this, and the board will continue to support the council in listening to and responding to the needs of tenants.

“ I encourage all tenants to get involved by engaging with council communications, working with the Tenant Led Panel or feeding back to their Housing Officer. ”



Artist's impression of the proposed remodelling of Buxton House

Tenant-led Panel

Antoinette Cooper

Chair of Tenant Advisory and Grants Panel

We have evolved from two panels into the Tenant Led Panel (TLP) in the last year. This has brought together a wider breadth of experience and knowledge across the tenants and meant less duplication across our work. This is also a more efficient process to feed tenant concerns to Council officers to influence service improvements, policies and processes. We are here to lend challenge and tenant perspective to the day-to-day management of council houses in Kirklees. We meet as a panel monthly to consider reports and feedback from the service. We also have two seats on the Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board, and we attend the Tenant Forum meetings, which are held Quarterly. This way, we hear directly from the Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs) and Street Voice (SVs) representatives.

The Tenant Led Panel also oversee small grants. In 2023/24, a total of £5,185 was awarded to support activities delivered by TRAs or other community groups on behalf of tenants. Activities included gardening and planting in both the Heckmondwike and Batley areas, activities for children offered during the school holidays, developing a community hub on green space in Dewsbury, and providing room hire for youth at Windybank. Last year, the panel also approved expenditures to help support the running costs of the TRAs, totalling £2,532.



£2,532

in help supporting the running costs of the **Tenant and Resident Association groups**



£5,185

in **Tenant and Resident Association Grants**



If you want to keep up to date with what we are doing and get involved, contact us at:

get.involved@kirklees.gov.uk

Quality and safety standards

Development of council properties

As a Council, we want to look after our existing homes and continue to develop new accommodation. This can be the redesign or refurbishment of existing but outdated housing that no longer meets modern-day standards, for example, building safety or new homes. It can take a long time before regenerated or newly developed homes are ready for tenants, as we need to identify funding, conduct consultation and surveys, agree on the design, and seek planning permission before appointing a building contractor to start work. Here's a sample of the developments we are working on across Kirklees.

Buxton House remodelling

The proposed remodelling of Buxton House in Huddersfield town centre is an exciting regeneration project to improve fire safety, living standards and overall quality of life for residents.

Three open days were held in August 2023 to gather feedback on initial design proposals. The comments and concerns raised during consultations have been considered in the detailed designs. We have submitted a [planning application](#) for the scheme, which was determined and had consent granted in June 2024, and which will provide 47 apartments with one and two bedrooms. It is anticipated that building work will begin no later than September 2025



Sycamore Grange retirement living

The redevelopment of Sycamore Grange in Golcar, Huddersfield, is a significant project that will create a better living environment for older residents. Plans are being prepared for a brand-new housing development of 59 homes for older people that meets residents' needs and enables them to live independently in high-quality, energy-efficient homes. The building is now empty, and the next step is to prepare the building for demolition so that it can be ready for construction of the new housing scheme in 2025.



Bringing empty properties back into use – Oak Road

The council has refurbished four one-bedroom houses at Oak Road in Bradley. These properties had stood derelict for many years. To make them into suitable homes for our tenants, they needed extensive work, including new staircases, replumbing, doors and windows. Staff helped residents settle into their new homes and showed them how to use their new heating and hot water systems.



Oak Road before



Oak Road after

Affordable housing acquisitions – Chidswell Lane

We also purchased 14 new one-bedroom flats at Chidswell Lane in Dewsbury. These flats were provided in partnership with Barrett David Wilson Homes, through a Section 106 planning obligation and are the first of its kind for Kirklees Council. Section 106 means that the developer must provide a percentage of the homes on their development as affordable housing. The flats are now being let to new council tenants.



New flats at Chidswell Lane, Dewsbury

New build bungalows – Fernside View

We completed ten brand new two-bed bungalows, 2 of which are adapted for wheelchair users at Fernside View in Huddersfield, enabling older people and those with mobility difficulties to live in good quality accommodation. This project also helped those older people living in homes too large for their needs to move into homes which are more appropriate to their circumstances, also freeing up the larger homes for families to live in. The bungalows were created using innovative construction methods – they were built in a factory and delivered to the site as a flat pack, then assembled on site.



Cleared site at Fernside View before work commenced



Finished bungalows at Fernside View



Bungalows in development at Fernside View

Building safety

Ensuring our buildings are safe to live in remains one of our priorities. Work continued last year to carry out inspections, remedial work, and improvements to our processes. We are working on ensuring we continue to progress to progress work on fire safety and damp, mould and condensation.

In the last year we've carried out:

- 5,074 asbestos surveys carried out (100% compliance)
- 1,211 legionella risk assessments carried out (100% compliance)
- 1,256 communal passenger lift safety checks
- 4,112 Fire Risk Assessments carried out with 1,070 subsequent remedial actions completed
- 19,981 Gas Safety checks have been completed.

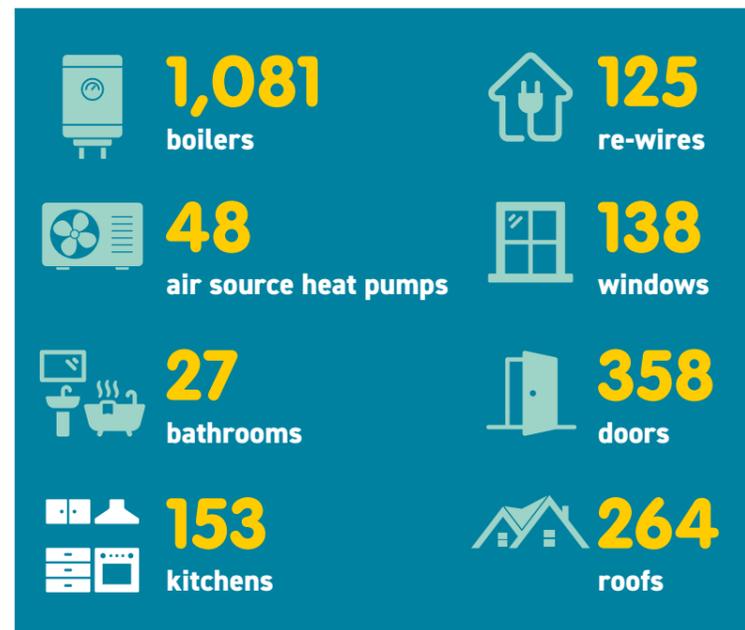


Decent homes and capital investment

In 2023-24, we spent £12m on improving our properties, including the following upgrades. This programme delivered on a 'worst-first' approach, improving the lives of tenants living in these homes. The new 5-year [Asset Management Plan](#) was agreed by Cabinet in March 2024, which launched a significant programme of investment to improve the condition of your homes.

In the last year we carried out the following replacements and installations on tenant homes:

- Boilers – 1,081
- Air source heat pumps - 48
- Bathrooms – 27
- Kitchens – 153
- Rewires – 125
- Windows – 138
- Doors - 358
- Roofs – 264



Environmental improvements and cyclical maintenance

We have carried out improvement schemes to our estates which significantly improve the environment in which tenants live and the surrounding areas. These improvements are based on feedback and consultation with tenants and residents and are designed in partnership with tenants. The aim is to improve the appearance of the estates you live in and, where possible, reduce future grounds maintenance needs and antisocial behaviour. This includes the installation of drying areas, maintenance of low walls, planting of bulbs and landscaping, adding or removing seating, and upgrading paths and lighting.

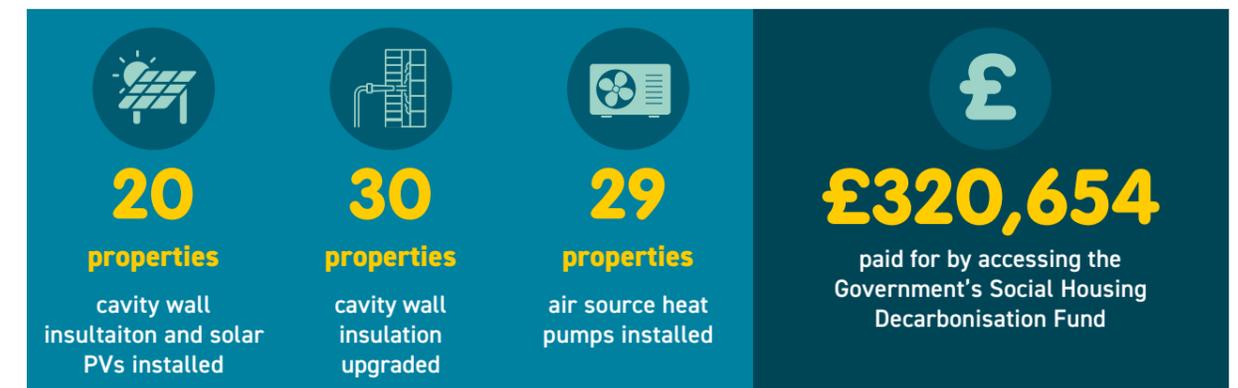
Schemes included:

- Albion Court, Meltham
- Longfield Avenue, Dalton
- Woodlands, Lepton.

2023-24 saw the reintroduction of a regular maintenance programme that focused on repairing footpaths, communal areas, and pointing/masonry. Our Housing Officers identified these as a priority, because of the potential risk of residents tripping and falling due to the poor condition of the paths. Works have now been completed in Firthcliffe, Liversedge, and this will be extended further in 2024/25 to also include outstanding repairs to fencing.

Improving homes' energy efficiency

By accessing the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, we have provided cavity wall insulation and Solar PVs to 20 properties, with a further 30 properties having cavity wall insulation upgraded, and 29 air source heat pumps have been installed, with an investment of over £300,000. We are now working on completing procurement and surveys on 218 properties identified for next year, intending to improve energy performance.



Repairs and maintenance

Carrying out property repairs is a routine area of work for the council. This year, we completed 93,637 jobs, a small increase of 1.3% compared to last year. This is an average of 4.4 jobs per property, and we completed a first-time fix on 88% of all repairs. We have renewed contracts with suppliers, focused on improving quality and value for money, and engaged with more local companies to provide supplies and services where possible.



Last year, we told you how we were taking parts out to the home where the repair work was needed rather than the operatives breaking off from their work to get a part or make a further appointment. This year, the stores team have been working with site teams to increase deliveries to the operative at the home they are repairing, and team leaders have been reviewing the stock of parts held on vans to improve the number of first-time fixes that can be achieved.

During 2023/24, we set up a dedicated Damp, Mould and Condensation team within the council's trade teams to respond to increased demands and work through the backlog of repairs. The team have completed 2,394 jobs, so it has started to impact on improving residents' homes.

The council has also worked on preparing 1,264 vacant properties so that they're ready for new residents to move in.



Adaptations

We support tenants who need adaptations to their homes to live independently. Property Services Adaptations teams have modified 254 homes to suit individual tenants' needs, enabling them to continue living independently. This can range from installing grab rails and widening doors to redesigning bathrooms or kitchens, so that they're more accessible for those who may have mobility issues.

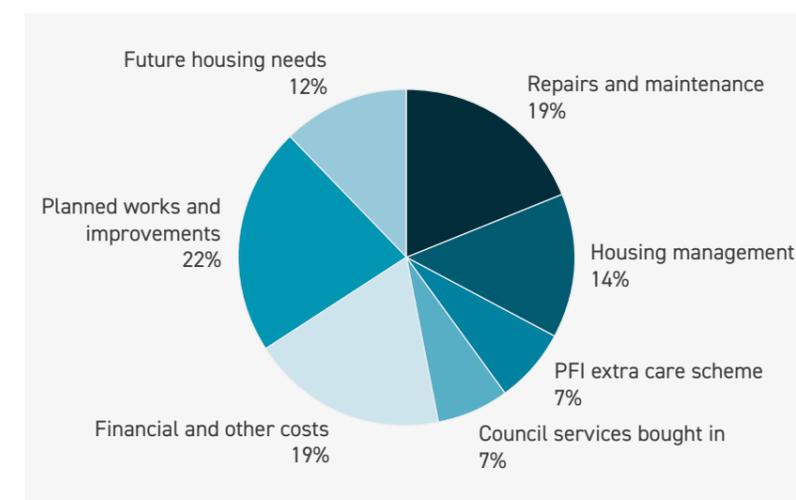
Transparency, influence and accountability

We want to make sure you know how the rent you pay is spent. The rental income the council receives is held in a separate account, and is specifically earmarked for managing, maintaining, improving, and building council homes. It's carefully managed to ensure the best outcomes for our communities and is spent wisely.

How will your rent be spent in 2024/25

- **Repairs and Maintenance:** 19p of every £1 is used for the essential upkeep and repairs of council houses, ensuring they are safe and comfortable.
- **Housing Management:** 14p of each £1 goes towards daily running council properties and keeping communal areas tidy.
- **Financial and Other Costs:** 19p from every £1 covers managing the HRA, ensuring every penny is spent wisely.
- **Planned Works and Improvements:** 22p of your £1 is set aside for scheduled improvements, updating older homes and facilities to modern standards.
- **Future Housing Needs:** 12p of each £1 is dedicated to planning for more homes and meeting the growing demand for quality council housing.
- **Bought in Council Services:** 7p of each £1 is spent on services purchased from other council departments such as anti-social behaviour and grounds maintenance.
- **Extra Care Scheme:** 7p of each £1 is used for delivering extra care scheme for older people who may need an additional bit of support to live independently.

In addition, the council will continue to invest the rental income we collect to expand our housing stock to provide more affordable, safe and decent homes to meet the increasing demand within Kirklees.



Tenant satisfaction

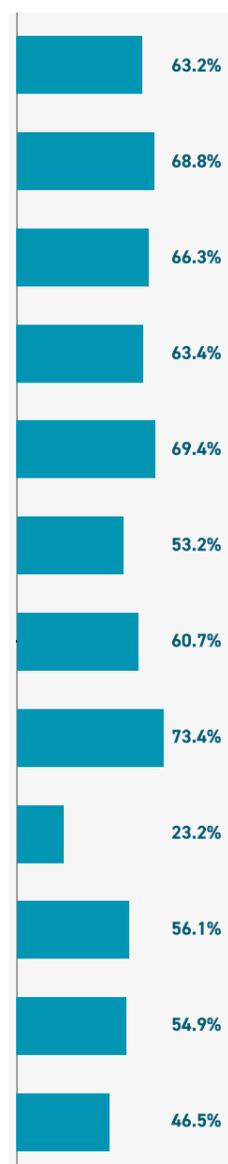
The council is committed to improving tenants' experience of our housing service and welcomes feedback from tenants on whether we're meeting the service standards we've published. We use the feedback we receive from surveys, consultation and complaints to shape the services we provide and make improvements where necessary. In addition, as part of the new Consumer Standards, the Regulator for Social Housing has identified Tenant Satisfaction Measures that the council must collect, send to the regulator each year, and publish. Both Homes and Neighbourhoods and Pinnacle manage Kirklees Council's council housing stock to report to the regulator.

We're doing this to support effective tenant scrutiny of our performance as a landlord in managing your homes and neighbourhoods. Tenants will also be able to compare how we compare to other landlords. This is the first time this data has been gathered and submitted to the regulator. It covers our activities delivered between April 2023 to March 2024.

Of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), 12 measures are covered by a Tenant Perception Survey. An external company undertook this work for the council during April and May 2023. It replaced the previous Satisfaction of Tenants and Residents Survey (STAR) that the council used to carry out each year. We're committed to working with tenants to understand how we can improve the experience you have of the landlord services you receive, and ensure we listen and act on your feedback.

Tenant perception survey results

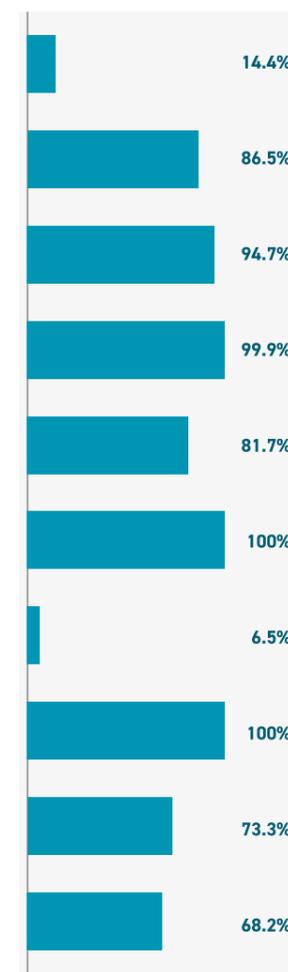
- **TP01:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord = **63.2%**
- **TP02:** Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service = **68.8%**
- **TP03:** Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair = **66.3%**
- **TP04:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained = **63.4%**
- **TP05:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe = **69.4%**
- **TP06:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them = **53.2%**
- **TP07:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them = **60.7%**
- **TP08:** Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect = **73.4%**
- **TP09:** Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling = **23.2%**
- **TP010:** Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained = **56.1%**
- **TP011:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood = **54.9%**
- **TP012:** Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour = **46.5%**



Other tenant satisfaction measures

The remaining Tenant Satisfaction Measures are based on the Council's Performance Information.

- **RP01:** Homes that do not meet the [Decent Homes Standard](#) = **14.4%**
- **RP02:** Non-emergency repairs completed within target timescale = **86.5%**
- **RP02:** Emergency repairs completed within target timescale = **94.7%**
- **BS01:** Gas safety checks completed = **99.9%**
- **BS02:** Fire safety checks completed = **81.7%**
- **BS03:** Asbestos safety checks completed = **100%**
- **BS04:** Water safety checks completed = **6.5%**
- **BS05:** Lift safety checks completed = **100%**
- **CH02:** Stage 1 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales = **73.3%**
- **CH02:** Stage 2 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales = **68.2%**
- **CO1:** Number of Stage 1 complaints relative to the size of the landlord (number of complaints per 1,000 properties) = **38.5**
- **CH01:** Number of Stage 2 complaints relative to the size of the landlord (number of complaints per 1,000 properties) = **9.4**
- **NM01:** Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord (number of cases per 1,000 properties) = **25.4**
- **NM01:** Anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents, relative to the size of the landlord (number of cases with hate incidents per 1,000 properties) = **4.5**



Tenant voice

We want to ensure we're listening to our tenants across all areas of the work we do. This year there's been a huge drive across our teams to do just that and together, working collaboratively, we've hosted 30 engagement projects across Kirklees and engaged with 2,648 tenants. Let's take a closer look at some of the work that's been going on.



Peace Garden at Batley Carr

Working with partners and Carlton Junior & Infant School, clubs and residents have transformed a derelict piece of land into a peaceful space. The place can be used for growing fruit and vegetables or just for peace and quiet; the new pathway means everyone can access it.

New Tenant and Resident Association in Heckmondwike

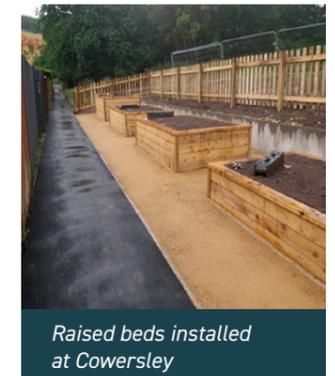


Supporting tenant and resident volunteers in setting up their groups to organise activities is a great way to help a community become active. In this case, we were approached by a group of residents living in Heckmondwike who wanted to form a Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) to improve environmental and housing issues and reduce social isolation/loneliness. Homes and Neighbourhoods facilitated a meeting with the Police and Community Safety Team to set up a public meeting for residents to meet us and discuss their local concerns on environmental and housing issues.

The TRA is now working closely with us. Their relationship with the Housing Management Officer has improved, and they are having fortnightly catch-ups with her and attending estate inspections to report issues. They deliver social activities every week at Brighton Street Community Centre, with over 30 people attending every week, and volunteers are maintaining and improving communal garden areas.

Cowlersley Environmental Works

Last summer, the Cowlersley Estate had some environmental improvement works carried out. As part of the work, new bollards were installed, raised beds were added, a new barrier to the South Avenue Car Park was added, and a green space was added to increase diversity. A new community garden will create a natural space for play, trees, and seasonal bulbs.



Spotlight on feedback at new-build schemes

We are continuing to listen to tenant feedback and adjust how we do things to improve services. Feedback from residents on the moving-in process and their new homes has revealed several learning points for the council that will contribute to our journey to improve, which we are implementing continuously. Let's break down the key points:

Before you move in

We have introduced regular weekly handover meetings to include staff from the teams concerned with developing, letting, managing, and maintaining new homes and IT and customer care staff. These meetings ensure that all staff involved in the handover process understand when properties will be ready and what they need to do to ensure that residents are kept informed of changes to their move-in date, that everything is in place for residents and that they are helped to settle into their new homes.

When you move in

We will be running sessions for residents moving into newly built homes in the future on how to operate key systems in their new homes, such as heating, hot water, and door entry systems.

We have already introduced a handover checklist for the builder to make sure that they have carried out all the necessary checks and provided all paperwork before they give us notice that properties will be ready. This will help us offer future residents more certainty over their move-in date and ensure that we can let homes be ready as soon as they are ready.

We will check draft handover packs for accuracy to ensure residents receive reliable information on using and operating their homes.

Future developments

We will carry out research before approving the use of systems and types of construction that are not traditional.



Landlord services

Last year, we worked on developing Service Standards to help staff and tenants understand what the council, as your landlord is responsible for and manage expectations. Based on the Tenancy Agreement, the Standards were recently launched and can be found using this link: [Service Standards](#).

Complaints

We are committed to strengthening and improving the way we handle your complaints. We are already working on the most recent Complaint Handling Code of Conduct that will be mandatory from 1st April 2024. As part of this process, we have completed an end-of-year [Annual Complaints Performance and Improvement 2023-24](#) which will give an insight into how we've performed and what we plan to improve.

Number of complaints

From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, the council responded to 1,031 complaints. 826 of these were new complaints. The Complaint Handling Code requires Stage 1 complaints to be resolved within ten days and 20 working days for Stage 2 complaints. However, we need to do better with response times and need to improve how long it takes to resolve a tenant's complaint. Our focus for 2024/25 is to improve our response times to investigate and reach a resolution with the tenant. We will also upskill all our managers to undertake fuller investigations and activate change as soon as possible where learning has been identified.



Reasons for complaints

The top five reasons for complaints were:

1. Poor information supplied
2. Lack of communication
3. Poor response
4. Repair not completed
5. Attitude of staff member.

We will make sure we learn from this feedback, that we meet the service standards we've promised. We will improve the way we keep you informed, and we will make sure our staff have the appropriate training in how they conduct themselves so that all tenants are treated with respect and fairness.

Compliments

In the last year, we've received 87 compliments from tenants. This is an increase from the previous year of nine. While we always appreciate receiving positive feedback, hearing about our team members going above and beyond is especially rewarding.

A closer look at what tenants tell us we do well

Some tenants can find the work we need to do in their homes unsettling or upsetting. The Quality and Liaison Officers supported Mr C, who had a new kitchen installed and could not stay in the property whilst their home was undergoing major work. Mr C said he was very happy with our help and support in having the kitchen and gave us 5 stars on the satisfaction survey for the new kitchen, the length of time, and how his needs were met. He thanked us and mentioned Property Services for everything we did.



From a Housing Management Officer:

"I visited the property above yesterday, and the [tenant] advised he would like to express his grateful thanks to NG (the Housing Management Officer) for all she has done to assist him since his wife died. He said if it weren't for NG he wouldn't be here now."

From a Housing Support Worker:

"The work you have put into her finances has been amazing and has definitely put her in a better position to be starting out her adult life. I think it is life changing, the support that you have provided. Thank you again for your support, it has been lovely working with you."

From a Tenant:

"I have been in contact with 'L' for quite a long time now. I am not in good health and live on my own. The Lady has helped me with so many financial problems that I don't know what I would of done without her. 'L' is always there for me."



Neighbourhood and community standard

Anti-social behaviour

Work on improving our response to anti-social behaviour (ASB) started last year in the form of a telephone survey by the Tenant Voice Team to understand the customer experience of those who had reported anti-social behaviour. The team completed 93 surveys with tenants who have a closed or ongoing ASB case opened in the last 12 months. Survey questions covered reporting of ASB, case management, support provided and satisfaction with outcomes.

This feedback will be used to develop the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour policy and procedures, in partnership with Safer Kirklees, the Police and Probation Service, among others, to support continuous improvements in how we address issues concerning and resolving cases of ASB.

Domestic abuse

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 sets out an expectation for social landlords to work cooperatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice (as set out in the new Consumer Standards).

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 strengthens protections, ensures housing support, and empowers survivors to escape abusive situations and find safe accommodation. We recognise and remain committed to our role in ensuring the safety of our tenants and their families. We do this by

- Working closely with Housing Solutions Service, local refuges and Domestic Abuse support services to support victims of abuse to be able to remain in their homes where possible or to move to appropriate and safe accommodation.
- Frontline officers will attend multi-agency meetings to ensure the correct housing advice is given to residents and professionals.
- Officers attend dedicated Domestic Abuse Forums to ensure we remain current with legislation and practice changes.
- We contribute to strategy and policy development, ensuring a strong housing focus.
- Frontline staff complete mandatory training bespoke to Homes and Neighbourhoods, which is designed to provide staff with the skills and knowledge to support tenants experiencing domestic abuse. The council works in partnership with the Pennine Domestic Abuse Partnership (PDAP) for specialist support. Anyone can contact PDAP directly at the 24-hour helpline – 0800 052 7222 Website - [Welcome to Pennine Domestic Abuse Partnership - PDAP](#).

Safeguarding

Kirklees Council believe tenants and their households should receive the right help at the right time, and everyone who encounters them has a role in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action. We approach this by:

- Providing staff with appropriate training for their role.
- Having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place.
- Ensuring staff have access to up-to-date and relevant safeguarding information.
- Attending dedicated forums ensures that H&N staff know legislative changes, shared learning, and best practices.
- Ensuring regular management supervision and support for frontline staff.
- Working closely with the Kirklees Safeguarding Adult Board and the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Partnership to ensure best practice.
- Promoting a culture of responsibility and accountability that enables lessons to be learned and due diligence to be consistently exercised (through regular safeguarding audits and case reviews)

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Please let us know if you have concerns for someone's welfare.

If you have concerns for an adult: [Report an adult safeguarding concern | Kirklees Council](#)

If you have concerns for a child: [Home - KSCP \(kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk\)](#)

Consultation on communal gardening services

Last year, we made changes to our grounds maintenance services for communal areas. We spend around £2 million a year on this service. Until now, the council has covered the costs but it is no longer financially sustainable for us to do so. We used the 'Get Involved' page on our website to seek views from tenants on a charge added to the weekly rent for maintaining shared areas. Following this feedback, we are still working on ideas of how to provide affordable services for tenants in the future. This year, we will seek further feedback on how to do this.



Tenancy standard



Tenancy support

Money advice

Our Money Advice Team has continued to work closely with tenants, helping them manage their money and reduce the risk of tenants being unable to pay their rent. The team does this by helping tenants access support during the continued cost of living crisis, with more applications being put forward. In some cases, these referrals, resulting in less funding being available, show the impact on people remains high. One in two people helped have cited an impact on their mental health due to financial issues.

- £126,579 distributed through 892 successful applications to the Housing Support Fund.
- £22,417 in energy vouchers were provided to 457 households.
- £31,000 in charity awards for tenants in need.



Pre-Apprenticeship Programme (PAP)

PAP is an unpaid study programme for 16-18-year-olds starting in late September each year. Homes and Neighbourhoods works with Kirklees College to engage, enable, and develop young adults to gain new or additional skills and move closer to the labour market and into employment. Calderdale & Kirklees Careers Service also provides support, and we prioritise young adults living in council properties who are not in education, employment, or training. Our fifth cohort commenced in September 2023, starting with 17 participants. We currently still have 13 who are active on the programme and are due to complete July 2024. From next year, the PAP will be managed by the Council's Employment and Skills Service. It will continue to prioritise young people living in Council housing. At the end of the scheme, 10 participants were actively looking for work, with others being offered apprenticeships, a work trial or employment.

Encouraging cancer screening

Last year, Public Health identified areas of low breast, bowel and cervical screening uptake in areas of deprivation, including areas of high council housing. Homes and Neighbourhood staff, supported by Public Health colleagues, collaborated to promote the benefits and importance of cancer screening to identified tenants to understand their level of understanding about cancer screening programmes, their challenges, and barriers to cancer screening programmes and to determine what steps could be taken to support individuals to overcome these barriers.

Activities ranged from completing surveys and sharing educational awareness leaflets inside the delivery of awareness-raising sessions supported by Pennine Breast Screening and the Council's Community Cohesion Team. The programme concluded in December 2023, and during this time, an additional 217 surveys were carried out.

Mutual exchange

As a landlord, we're keen to support tenants living in eligible housing to mutually exchange their homes.

Our Homefit Officer manages Mutual Exchange requests from tenants through a House Exchange computer system on behalf of the council. By the end of March 2023, there were 817 live adverts on the system. During that year, a total of 49 Mutual Exchanges had been completed.

Tenants with spare bedrooms who are unable to afford the additional charge are supported to 'right size' to free up bedrooms for larger families and reduce the cost to the tenant. The Homefit Officer supports individuals, and last year, this service saw an increase of 68% in referrals, with a higher number of customers having medical needs or being vulnerable. 66 tenants were rehoused, and we were able to support larger households to move into the freed-up housing.



Customer support and information

Our dedicated customer support team handled 61,604 calls last year, helping resolve issues and advising tenants across a wide range of housing management services.

This year, the team has been improving the quality of their service by using surveys with customers to understand why calls are duplicated. The team has undertaken work to improve the quality of adverts for vacant properties and reduced the risk of tenants having to speak to several people by dealing with a technical issue that resulted in calls being transferred to them incorrectly.

The team will signpost or refer customers to specialist support if needed, such as Money Advice, Uniform Exchange (helping parents access affordable uniforms for their children) or Works Better (Employability) Programme.



Meet the management team

Homes & Neighbourhoods operates under the strategic guidance and leadership of our Senior Management Team, led by the Service Director for Homes & Neighbourhoods.

Our Senior Management Team is:

Naz Parkar, Service Director

Chris Brown, Head Of Housing Management and Partnerships

David Brook, Head Of Repairs and Maintenance

Scott Wise, Head Of Assets and Building Safety

Jacqui Fieldhouse, Head of Finance (Housing Revenue Account)

Sarah Thistlethwaite, Service Development Manager



How to contact us

Telephone: **01484 414886**

Email: **housing@kirklees.gov.uk**

X (formerly Twitter): **@HNKirklees**

Facebook: **@KirkleesHN**

Website: **www.kirklees.gov.uk/Council-housing**

To make sure we can contact you for essential news and updates, **please make sure your records are kept up to date.** If your details have changed, contact our Customer Support and Information team on the details above.

We want to share more news with tenants more regularly. **Sign up to our Homes & Neighbourhoods tenant newsletter** for more regular good news and important updates.