

Your Home, Your Neighbourhood

for council tenants and leaseholders



Annual Report 2019/20

Also in this issue:

Sheffield's Steel Spirit shows its mettle

Our priorities for 2020/21 • Stay Safe everyone



Welcome...

to Sheffield Council Housing Service's Annual Report 2019/20, which looks back on our performance over the last year.

As always tenants have helped us design and write this report, which this year celebrates community spirit and the people who go the extra mile to help others. We have seen countless examples of this over recent months and I'm extremely proud of how our tenants, staff and community organisations have worked together to support communities across the city.

We also outline our priorities for the coming 12 months, which is especially important this year as we look to the future with hope and positivity.

Thank you once again and stay safe.

Janet Sharpe, Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service



SHEFFIELD'S STEEL SPIRIT SHOWS ITS METTLE

The last few months have been unprecedented times for us all but what has really shone through is the way in which people in our communities have come together to support those who have needed some extra help. We have included some examples in this report but there are far too many to mention so a big thank you to everyone who has gone the extra mile. We realise there are lots of you!

Our staff have continued to work on the frontline throughout the pandemic and we know you appreciate their efforts from the lovely feedback we've had on social media and elsewhere, describing our colleagues as 'the absolute best'.

And our community and voluntary organisations have played a huge part in reaching out to vulnerable people and those isolated by the pandemic. When the going got tough, Sheffield got going and really showed its steel spirit.

THANK YOU.



Rainbow displays made by Shooters Grove schoolchildren for residents at Roscoe Court sheltered scheme



Front cover: Kim McMaster and Donna Hobson of Norfolk Park TARA putting together food parcels.

YOUR HOME STANDARD

Throughout the pandemic our Neighbourhood Teams carried out thousands of welfare checks on tenants who may have needed additional help and support.

Hundreds of people asked for practical assistance with food shopping and collecting prescriptions whilst thousands more needed follow-up support.

Some of our officers helped the Community Response Teams, doing everything from posting leaflets to delivering PPE equipment and IT software.

The rough sleeper team and volunteer staff sourced rooms for around 90 people in a very short space of time and colleagues worked hard to accommodate unprecedented numbers of people in temporary housing.

- We carried out 496 adaptations in 2019/20, with 80% of fast track applications completed in 17 weeks



Asda community partner Carla Gillette and Ellie Eadon from The Link at Stradbroke collect goodies for gift bags delivered to isolated local people during lockdown

- We completed 152,692 repairs on the first visit, just over 93% of our total
- We offered a Housing Plus annual visit to over 9 out of 10 tenants and, of those, just over half met with a Neighbourhood Officer
- More than 9 out of 10 tenants thought the Housing Plus visit was useful and that any support needs were identified and addressed

TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

We have all found new ways to keep in touch safely and lift each other's spirits during lockdown.

Children of key workers at Shooters Grove School made wonderful rainbow displays for residents at Stannington's Roscoe Court sheltered scheme.

Gleadless Valley Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) arranged weekly Facebook quizzes while Parson Cross Community Development Forum held memory cafes and Tai Chi classes on Zoom.

We worked with Heeley Trust to hold weekly Zoom IT sessions for tenants and residents, sourcing donated devices for vulnerable families. We also helped TARAs set up their own social media pages to connect with local people.

In the future we plan to further develop ways of communicating remotely so more tenants can engage and work with us in ways that suit them.

- The Housing Contact Centre received 228,123 phone calls in the year and a further 298,810 were for repairs
- The average time in minutes to answer customer calls dropped in 2019/20 from 3.38 to 2:52 for the Housing Contact Centre and from 4.05 to 3:03 for Repairs
- 62% of customers found it easy to make a complaint
- Nearly 90% of tenants say housing staff are courteous and respectful when dealing with their enquiry



Louise Askew and Louise Ashmore of Parson Cross Community Development Forum

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STANDARD

During recent months communities have pulled together to help family, friends and neighbours get through tough times, providing invaluable support and practical help to thousands of people.

Stradbroke Tenants and Community Association distributed gift bags including activity books, craft sets and feel-good items to isolated residents and young people.

Norfolk Park TARA delivered care packages to nursing home residents and organised online competitions for local children.

Our estates teams have worked tirelessly to keep communal areas inside and out safe, clean and tidy, as well as helping out colleagues in sheltered housing.

And one of our caring block cleaners checked up regularly on elderly residents shielding in tower blocks. This is yet another example of someone going above and beyond to help the most vulnerable.

- In 2019/20 citywide 99.7% of fly-tipping was removed within target and 98.4% of offensive graffiti removed within one day
- An average of 7.8 out of 10 people are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live and 80% think the shared green areas around their home are well-maintained
- 76% are satisfied that communal areas are kept free of litter and graffiti
- Based on your feedback, we aim to improve the cleaning of staircases and landings in blocks of flats

David Priest and Joanne Pitts of Norfolk Park TARA



TENANCY STANDARD

Many community organisations, Tenants and Residents Associations and voluntary groups have helped people struggling financially due to the Covid pandemic by providing food parcels.

The Link Community at Stradbroke has supplied essential low cost goods to customers who can't afford to shop at big retailers.

And Flower Estate Family Action worked in partnership with Flower TARA to provide family-size cleaning and toiletry packs for those in need.

These projects have helped finances stretch that bit further as well as offering a little bit of contact to isolated people.

Staff in our Income Management Team have supported hundreds of tenants with advice about their rent and finances, helping to set up payment plans and Universal Credit claims.

- On average 7.5 out of 10 people are satisfied with the service provided when dealing with their rent
- The average number of weeks a property is vacant decreased slightly in 2019/20 from 10.3 to 10
- Overall tenancy turnover has increased slightly from 8.2% to 8.5%
- 7 out of 10 tenants were satisfied with how their anti-social behaviour complaint was dealt with, a satisfaction level we want to increase



PRAISE AND SERVICE AREAS WE CAN IMPROVE

We resolved 6.2 out of 10 problems within our timescale of three working days, compared to 6.8 in 2018/19. 7.3 out of 10 investigations and investigation reviews were completed in 28 days, compared to 6 last year.

We opened 193 new investigations and reviews in 2019/20.

We are pleased that 7 out of 10 tenants felt that the officer who dealt with their complaint was courteous and respectful but we acknowledge that the overall satisfaction level with how complaints are handled is low and something we strive to improve.

The figures below show how many praises and problems were recorded for each service area in 2019/20.

	Praise	Problems	
Rehousing	4	95	
	3	46	Rents
Repairs	236	2506	
	10	43	Estates
ASB	0	29	
	0	4	Community Engagement
Investment	4	48	
	26	97	Tenancy Management
Point of Contact	15	92	

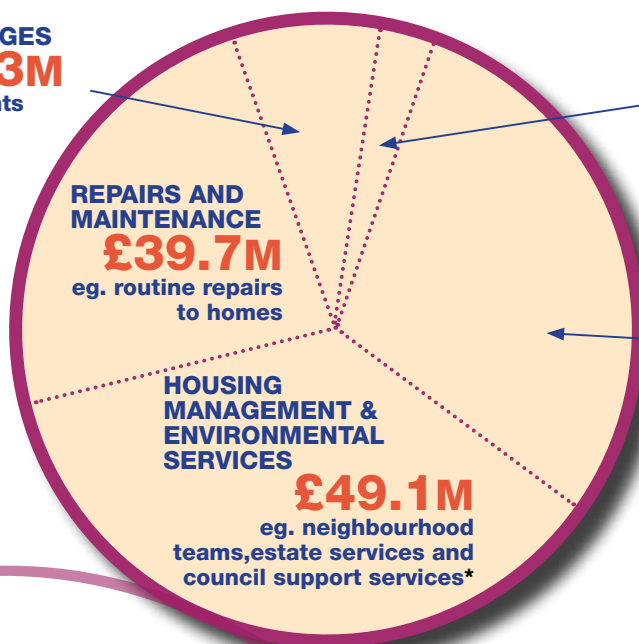
VALUE FOR MONEY

More than 8 out of 10 tenants think that the rent they pay is value for money.

* The Housing and Neighbourhoods Service 'buys in' some services from other parts of the council for things like running the call centre, legal services, building management, publicity and public relations.

FINANCING CHARGES
£13.3M
 eg. interest payments on borrowing

OTHER CHARGES
£4.4M
 eg. insurance, council tax



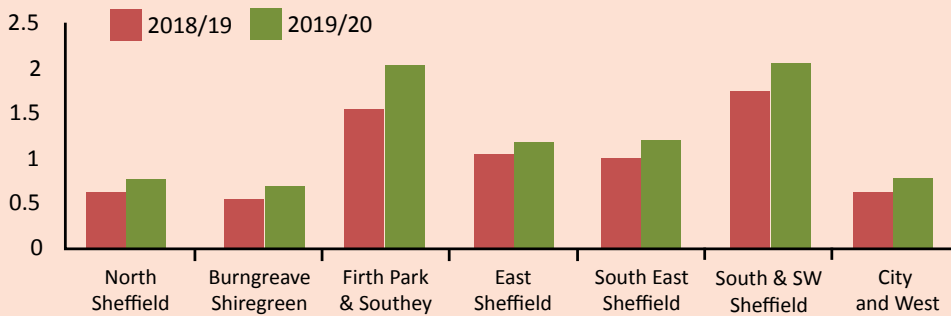
INVESTMENT IN THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME
£43.8M
 eg. replacement of obsolete heating, kitchens and bathrooms

Annual Update Information for 2018-19 to

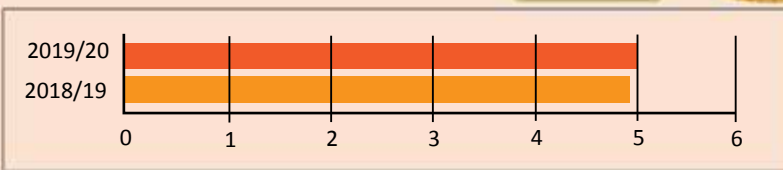
Rents and Income

Arrears in 19/20 increased as expected up to end of Feb, due mainly to the increasing number of tenants claiming Universal Credit. A further increase in arrears in March is linked to tenants being affected by Covid-19.

Current tenant arrears (£m)



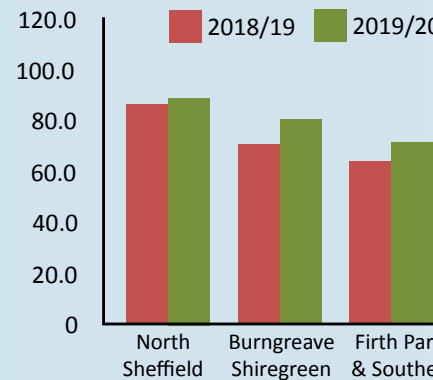
Former tenant arrears (£m)



Antisocial

New ASB cases numbers have fallen

New ASB cases per 1,000 p



Satisfaction score with the way the ASB case was dealt with

Supply of Council Housing

The number of Right to Buy properties has fallen and the number of properties acquired has increased

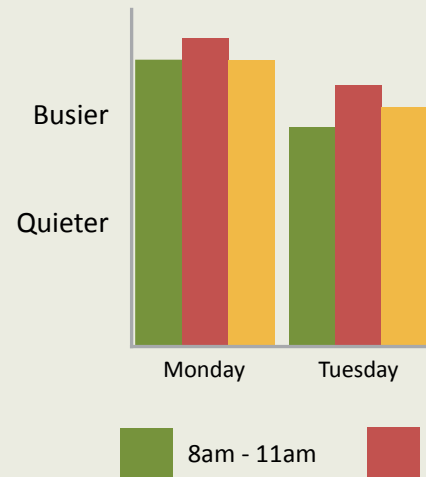
	2018/19	2019/20
Number of HRA properties	39,160	38,853
Number of properties sold under the Right to Buy scheme	361	374

There were 30% more properties acquired or built in 2019/20 compared to 2018/19, and at a lower average cost

Number of properties acquired or built	78	101
Average unit cost including fees, purchase prices and all repairs (£)	72,632	70,559
Number of new homes built or acquired by other social housing providers	66	26

Communication v

Call Centre v



For housing calls, we are busier on Wednesday and Friday

Mondays are still the busiest days for housing calls across the week and the spread of calls over 18 months is

2019-20

Behaviour

ten in four areas compared to 2018-19

properties for 2018-19 to 2019-20



2018/19

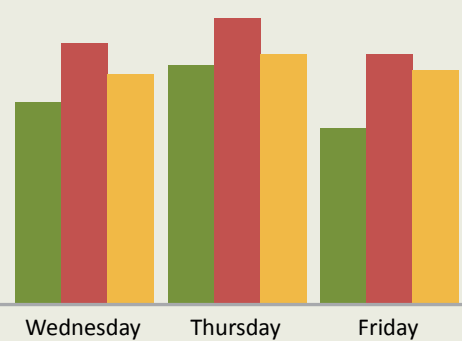
6.6

2019/20

7.1

with Housing section

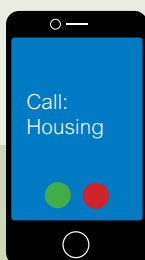
olumes: Housing



11am - 2pm 2pm - 5pm

least busy on mornings.

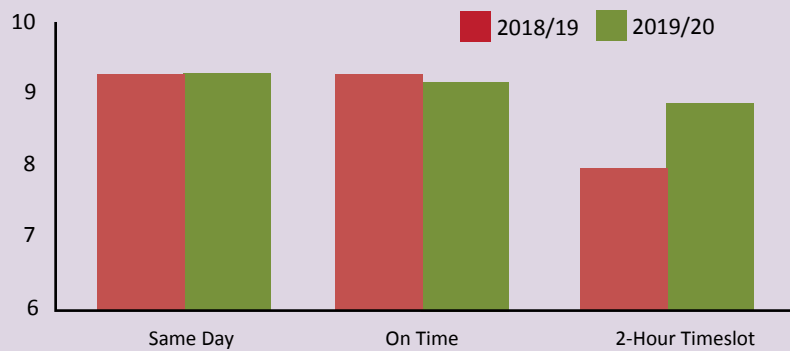
t, but the more evenly go.



Repairs

The score for 2-hour time slot has improved significantly. The satisfaction score has also improved.

Same day, completed on time and 2-hour time slot (out of 10)



Satisfaction with Repairs Visit

Satisfaction with the Repairs visit

2018/19

9.0

2019/20

9.3



Our Properties

Property types by bedroom numbers

	0 Bed	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5+ Bed	Total
Bedsit	153	3	-	-	-	-	156
Flat	6	10,968	3,272	117	3	1	14,367
Maisonette	-	13	2,067	702	8	1	2,791
House	-	56	7,499	9,803	370	21	17,749
Bungalow	2	1,631	936	52	-	1	2,622
Sheltered	175	784	105	1	-	-	1,065
	336	13,455	13,879	10,675	381	24	38,750



HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

We set ourselves some ambitious priorities for the year ahead before the Covid pandemic hit. In next year's report we'll let you know how well we did during these most challenging times.

Build and acquire more council homes

In last year's business plan we committed to delivering 1,600 new council homes by 2023/24 but for 2020/21 we want to increase that by 1,500 - totalling 3,100 new homes over the next 10 years. Our plans will be driven by what type of housing is needed in which areas of the city.

Develop a pre-tenancy support package

We will introduce changes to the way we support new tenants so they have the best possible start to efficiently managing their tenancy. This can be a challenge for young people setting up home for the first time, so we'll focus on helping that particular group as much as we can.

Fire safety and regulation

Work will continue with fire safety improvements to tower blocks, including updated fire risk assessments and the completion of any required work. We are also working with the Government on best practice around resident involvement and ensuring people know what to do if a fire occurs.

Review the cost and performance of services

We don't deliver our services in isolation and often work with departments across the Council to share costs and resources. We will continue to review these arrangements annually to ensure they remain value for money.

Broaden tenant engagement

We want to engage with a broader range of tenants and so far over 400 people have given us their views on how we should do this in the future. A team of national experts have also

independently reviewed our service. All of this will feed into a new Tenant Engagement Strategy and Action Plan for 2020/21.

Charged gardening scheme

During 2019/20 we started planning and consulting on a charged gardening scheme for tenants who want additional support maintaining their garden. Customer feedback will shape the final proposals, which we aim to implement in 2020.

Environmental improvements

We will develop and consult on a plan for environmental improvements, including work to paths, boundaries, roads and communal spaces.

Review of Housing Offices and community buildings

Housing+, new technology and changing customer services can impact on our current accommodation needs, so we will review this over the next 12 months to ensure it still delivers value for money. We will also review our community buildings to ensure we are making the best use of those too.

Transforming customer access

In 2019/20 we have been finding out how people access our services and whether that meets the changing needs of customers and our business. Supporting digital access remains a key priority but we realise it doesn't suit everyone so our challenge is to balance technology with personal contact. We will continue to run free IT support sessions for tenants with Heeley Trust and train TARA Digital Champions to help others in their communities.

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