

Tenant & Leaseholder Annual Report 2018/19

Jim Gibson – Chair of the Tenant Board

This years' Annual report has been written by the Enabling and Projects Team and approved by the members of the Tenant Board. Chair of the Tenant Board, Jim Gibson, gives his view as to why resident involvement is so important:

“Getting involved in the Tenant Board, and other methods of involvement, is a very crucial role to play alongside the City Council”

This last year has seen a lot of changes at the City Council and its vital that residents views are represented to ensure that the changes don't impact negatively for tenants and residents across the city.

Over this last year we have finished the work suggested by the Chartered Institute of Housing to make the involvement service stronger, and work is continuing to ensure that it's embedded at all levels with Housing Services – making sure that tenants have a voice and can influence the services that they receive. I would encourage everyone to get involved in any way that they can – even something as simple as filling in an online survey can make sure that your views are heard and that the council know what is important to you.

The Tenant Board also support the Neighbourhood Environmental Improvement Scheme budget – this is spent on projects that can make our estates safer and more welcoming for everyone. Last year we spent £50,800 On 14 schemes across the city, and every scheme has made a big difference for local residents.

If you are interested in finding out more, please call a member of the team on 235916, 238969 or 238515, or email communities@stoke.gov.uk

Councillor Randolph Conteh – Cabinet Member for Communities and Safer City

It is my great pleasure to present the 2018/19 Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders. This report presents an update on the performance of Housing Services against key areas of the business and clearly shows the excellent progress being made to deliver improvement across all areas of the service. These improvements include reductions in rent arrears and reductions in the amount lost through properties being left vacant. We have also seen increases in the number of compliments into the service.

I am immensely proud of the achievements of this service and the dedication and hard work of officers. I am also extremely grateful to the ongoing support provided by those tenants who are actively engaged in helping to review services and drive improvements into everything we do.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that Stoke on Trent City Council was successful in achieving the UK Housing - "Council of the Year – 2019," for our ambitious housing market being one of the fastest growing in the UK and we're continuing to improve social housing across the city, and investing in housing overall.

Despite what we have already achieved, we remain committed to continuing to develop the service in order to do the very best we can for our tenants and leaseholders. We will be completing a further health check on all of our housing services early next year. As with other years we will develop an action plan from the findings of the health check in order to focus our efforts. We will also be undertaking work to better understand customer satisfaction. This will provide much more detailed information on how tenants and leaseholders feel about the services that we offer and what we can continue to do better.

In order to support our approach to ongoing improvement, we are planning to develop the role of our involved tenants and create more opportunities for tenants to help improve services.

We will be making more use of online forms, text messages, informal consultation and face to face feedback to make it easier for tenants to tell us what they think about services and to share their ideas.

I am looking forward to working with the new Portfolio Holder, Councillor Joanna Powell-Beckett, to continue to deliver improvements for our tenants and ensuring that, as a City Council, we remain committed to ensuring our tenants have safe, comfortable homes and access to effective and efficient housing maintenance and management services.

Stock Profile as at 31st March 2019

We manage 17,994 homes which is made up of the following:

- Flats: 2,945: - 1 bed = 914, 2 bed = 2002, 3 bed = 29
- Houses: 11,437: - 1 bed = 9, 2 bed = 4909, 3 bed = 6360, 4 bed = 149, 5 bed = 1, 6 bed = 9
- Bungalows: 3,612: - 1 bed = 3310, 2 bed = 293, 3 bed = 9
- The council has 388 leaseholder properties
- There were 203 right to buy sales in 2018/19 this compares to 157 right to buy sales in 2017/18.

Tenant profile

Based on Main Tenant/Head Household March 19. Number of tenants is 17,824

Age Groups of Tenants

- All ages categories of tenants account for 17,824 which is 100% of tenants.
- In the age group 18 to 24 there are 670 tenants which is 3.76% of the total tenants.
- In the age group 25 to 34 there are 2,879 tenants which is 16.15% of the total tenants.
- In the age group 35 to 44 there are 3,053 tenants which is 17.13% of the total tenants
- In the age group 45 to 54 there are 3,307 tenants which is 18.55% of the total tenants.
- In the age group 55 to 64 there are 2,791 tenants which is 15.66% of the total tenants.
- There are 4,779 tenants which are over 65 which is 1.945 of the total tenants.

Disability Profile

- Out of the 17,824 tenants, 273 tenants said that they had a disability, 5,200 said they did not have a disability, 12,351 did not answer the question.

Repairs

- We have achieved an average of **97%** satisfaction with responsive repairs for the year 2018/19.
- **365** is the average number of repair jobs logged per day for 2018/19
- **5.6 days is the** average number of days to complete a repair in 2018/19

Repairs Compliance Information

- **100%** of properties have valid gas safety certificate in 2018/19 compared to 100% of properties in 2017/18
- **99.99%** of properties have an electrical test certificate that are less than 10 years old in 2018/19 compared to 99.33% in 2017/18. There is **1 property outstanding a certificate**

Voids, Allocations and Lettings

- The average annual re-let time for a **standard void** in 2018/19 is **28 days** compared to 35 days in 2017/18
- The average annual re-let time for a **non-standard void** in 2018/19 was **69 days** compared to 85 days in 2017/18
- **179** voids as at 31st March 2019 compared to 192 as at 31st March 2018
- **2,629** Households on the Housing Register at the end of March 2019 compared to 2,497 in March 2018
- **1,268** properties let during 2018/19 compared to 1,381 2017/18
- **1,333** tenancies terminated in 2018/19 compared to 1,371 in 2017/18
- **£683,631.78** cumulative rent loss in 2018/19 compared to £962,649.98 in 2017/18

Rents

- Current rent arrears as at March 2019 £1,330,967 compared to £1,477,635 in March 2018
- Arrears are **2.02%** of the annual debit as at March 2019 compared to 2.20% as at March 2018

Income Advice

Tenant Support 2018/19 compared to 2017/18

- **486** CAB referrals for debt advice in 2018/19 compared to 393 in 2017/18
- **1,342** Income advice team referrals for 2018/19 compared to 1,387 in 2017/18

Formal Action

- **111** Evictions carried out in 2018/19 compared to 107 in 2017/18
- **427** cases entered to court in 2018/19 compared to 549 in 2017/18
- **3,158** Notices seeking possession in 2018/19 compared to 3,025 in 2017/18

Customer Access

- 683,045 customers were helped by us in 2018/19 compared to 647,833 customers in 2017/18.
- Monday was the busiest day in both 2018/19 and 2017/18.
- Longton was the busiest centre in both 2018/19 and 2017/18.
- 441,413 calls were handled by the contact centre in 2018/19 compared to 596,614 in 2017/18.
- 2.1 million minutes was the time we spent talking calls in 2018/19 compared to 1.9 million minutes in 2017/18.
- 78% of presented calls were handled in 2018/19 compared to 69% of presented calls in 2017/18.
- March was the busiest month in both 2018/19 and 2017/18.
- 6 minutes 32 seconds was the average length of a call in 2018/19 compared to 6 minutes 27 seconds in 2017/18.
- There were 184,378 online transactions in 2018/19 compared to 132,320 online transactions in 2017/18. Online transactions includes all payments and e-forms on the Stoke-on-Trent city council Website.

Complaints and Customer Feedback

- **1700** complaints were received in 2018/19 (58.3% of 2916 received Council wide) (Although there is an increase in the number of complaints, it should be noted there are now more teams in the directorate which will attribute to the total figure reported). This compared to 1286 in 2017/18 which was 59.2% of 2171 received council wide.
- **“Service Delay” (missed appointments)** was the highest category of complaints received at 451 (26.5.%) for 2018/19. This is compared to 36.8% in 2017/18 where Service Delivery was the highest category of complaints.
- **871** (51.2%) of complaints in 2018/19 were either partially upheld or upheld, compared to 45.7% in 2017/18.
- **79** (4.6%) of the complaints received in 2018/19 progressed to stage 2 complaints (44.3% of the stage 2 complaints were either partially upheld or upheld) this is compared to 100 (7.7%) of the 1286 complaints in 2017/18 that progressed to stage 2, of which 49% were partially upheld or upheld.
- **20** complaints went to the Local Government Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman of which 4 were upheld. This is compared to 8 complaints in 2017/18 where 1 was upheld.
- **35** comments were received by Housing and Customer Services in 2018/19. This is compared to 41 in 2017/18. (a comment is defined as a contact that has been made to the City Council which doesn't express satisfaction, but, may for example, make a suggestion as to how a service can be improved).
- **482** compliments were received in 2018/19. This is compared to 402 compliments in 2017/18.

Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) 2017 (Latest Position Statement)

Value for Money

- **77%** of residents satisfied with the quality of their home
- **80%** of residents satisfied with rent providing value for money
- **76%** of residents satisfied with the overall service
- **69%** of residents satisfied with service charges providing value for money

Customer Satisfaction

- **79%** of residents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- **72%** of residents satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service
- **71%** satisfied with the condition of their home
- **59%** of residents satisfied with the way the City Council deals with anti-social behaviour
- **71%** of residents feel they are kept informed about things that might affect them

How we spend the Housing Income received

- An example £100 would be split down as follows:
- £9.63 per £100 was spent on Capital Financing Costs (£6,485,757)
- £26.75 per £100 was spent on Capital Programme (£18,017,614)
- £12.25 per £100 was spent on Employees (£8,247,159)
- £3.95 per £100 was spent on Premises Related Expenditure (£2,658,400)
- £3.06 per £100 was spent on Supplies and Services (£2, 063,134)
- £39.69 per £100 was spent on Uritas (£26, 728,380)
- £3.36 per £100 was spent on Support Services (£2,261,907)
- £1.02 per £100 was spent on Third Party Payments (£686,738)
- £0.29 per £100 was spent on Transport Related Expenditure (£197,930)

Services provided to tenants and leaseholders

Did you know that the council provides the following services to tenants and leaseholders?

- **Cleaning**
Our Facilities Team provides the cleaning service to apartment blocks with communal areas. The service covers general cleaning of the shared areas inside the building.
- **Grounds Maintenance**
The council's Streetcare and Greenspace Team maintain the green spaces on the housing estates, including communal and shared gardens.
- **CCTV**
We have installed CCTV cameras around our sheltered schemes and apartment blocks to help increase safety and act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour.

- **Lifts – servicing**
We regular service and maintain the lifts within our apartment blocks and sheltered schemes.
- **Caretaking**
Our staff carry out regular fire and health and safety inspections in apartment blocks with communal areas, on a weekly or twice weekly basis. They also attend to general maintenance, removing vandalism, graffiti and small amounts of fly tipped rubbish.
- **Communal Water Usage**
The communal water supply to common spaces in apartment blocks provides water for cleaning. Within sheltered schemes it services the laundry rooms, guest rooms, bathrooms and toilets.
- **Door entry systems servicing**
Access to the internal communal areas is usually through a secure door entry system in order to provide reassurance to tenants living in the blocks. Door entry systems are serviced twice a year to keep them in good working order.
- **Communal electricity**
Where there are communal spaces within apartment blocks, we provide electricity to power these areas for heating, lighting, door entry and security systems.
- **Health and Safety testing**
Safety is a priority and we ensure that all the appropriate checks and tests are done including the fire alarm, fire-fighting equipment, water hygiene and sprinkler systems.
- **Fixed electrical and emergency lighting testing**
The council is committed to ensuring its properties are fully safety compliant and exceed current fire safety regulations. We regularly service and test these.
- **Communal TV aerials**
The council provides communal aerial systems to apartment blocks as well as some houses and bungalows. These are serviced and maintained by the council through our repairs and maintenance company, Unitas.