


Dover District Council

# Housing Services

Annual Report

HOUSING SERVICES
DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

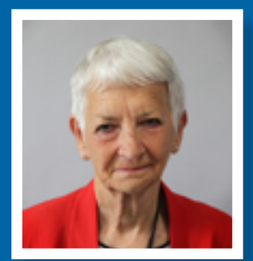
October 2026

# Foreword

This year has been one of significant progress for our Housing Service. We maintained high levels of tenant satisfaction, delivered excellent repairs performance, achieved strong rent collection rates and continued to invest in homes, neighbourhoods and resident services. We are particularly proud to have received a C2 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing, confirming that we are meeting the standards expected of social housing landlords.

While we have made positive progress, we know there is more to do. Your feedback tells us that communication, complaints handling, neighbourhood services and opportunities to influence decisions remain important to you, and these areas will be a key focus for us in the year ahead.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to share their views, attend events, complete surveys or work with us during the year. By listening to your experiences and acting on your feedback, we can continue to improve services and deliver high-quality homes and neighbourhoods that residents deserve.



**Cllr Pam Brivio**
Housing Portfolio Holder



**Andy Vincent**
Director of Housing and Place





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# Welcome to your Annual Report

**This report looks back at the past year and shows how we have performed as your landlord. It highlights the services we provide, improvements we have made, how we have spent our resources, and where we need to do better.**

We are committed to providing safe, high-quality homes and listening to your feedback. Your views help us improve our services and shape our future plans.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their experiences and worked with us during the year. We hope you find this report useful and informative.



# How are we performing?

**In 2025/26 the Regulator of Social Housing gave Dover District Council's Housing Service a C2 rating following a regulatory inspection.**

This is the second highest rating available to social landlords, however in its judgement the Regulator identified some weaknesses in the delivery of outcomes and highlighted areas where further improvement is needed. We are committed to addressing these areas and building on this positive result.

The inspection involved a detailed review of documents and service performance, attendance at a Dover District Tenant Consultative Group meeting and discussions with both staff and tenants to gain a better understanding of residents' experiences of our services.

The outcome reflects the significant work undertaken to improve housing services in recent years. In early 2025, we introduced a Housing Improvement Plan focused on strengthening services and delivering better outcomes for residents.

This included carrying out a stock condition survey to improve our understanding of the condition of our homes and future investment needs, reviewing and restructuring the housing management team to increase neighbourhood coverage and support, and consulting with tenants to better understand their communication and engagement preferences.

Achieving a C2 rating does not mean our improvement journey is complete. We know there is more to do and remain committed to listening to residents, learning from feedback, and providing meaningful opportunities for tenants to influence decisions. The findings from the inspection, together with what residents continue to tell us, will help shape our ongoing improvement programme and ensure we continue to deliver better services for residents.





## Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2025/26

**As a landlord, we are required to collect and report annually on performance using a core set of defined measures, called Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).**

These are intended to measure our progress and allow you to scrutinise our performance and hold us to account.

We collect this information by carrying out a Tenant Survey every year with you, opening in the summer and closing near the end of the year.

This year, 682 tenants took part in our Tenant Survey to share their thoughts on the quality of our services.

We've provided the figures for 2025/26, 2024/25 and the national median as comparables.

All TSM measures are also available and accessible on our website:

Tenant Satisfaction Measures - Dover District Council

## Satisfaction Survey TSMs

| Tenant Satisfaction Measure | DDC 2025/26 | DDC 2024/25 | National median |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overall satisfaction with the service from the landlord | 77.4% | 77.3% | 74.0% |
| Overall satisfaction with the repairs service over the last 12 months | 76.8% | 78.7% | 76.2% |
| Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair | 73.6% | 73.1% | 73.0% |
| Satisfaction with how well maintained the home is | 73.8% | 74.4% | 74.2% |
| Satisfaction with how safe the home is | 77.1% | 81.0% | 79.3% |
| Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenants' views and acts on them | 61.4% | 61.9% | 63.5% |
| Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them | 68.2% | 66.3% | 73.8% |
| Satisfaction that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect | 77.7% | 78.7% | 79.1% |
| Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to complaint handling | 35.3% | 48.3% | 36.4% |
| Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained | 63.2% | 59.6% | 69.7% |

| Tenant Satisfaction Measure | DDC 2025/26 | DDC 2024/25 | National median |
|---|---|---|---|
| Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood | 58.4% | 57.6% | 67.2% |
| Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to ASB case handling | 56.5% | 54.0% | 60.4% |

## Management information TSMs

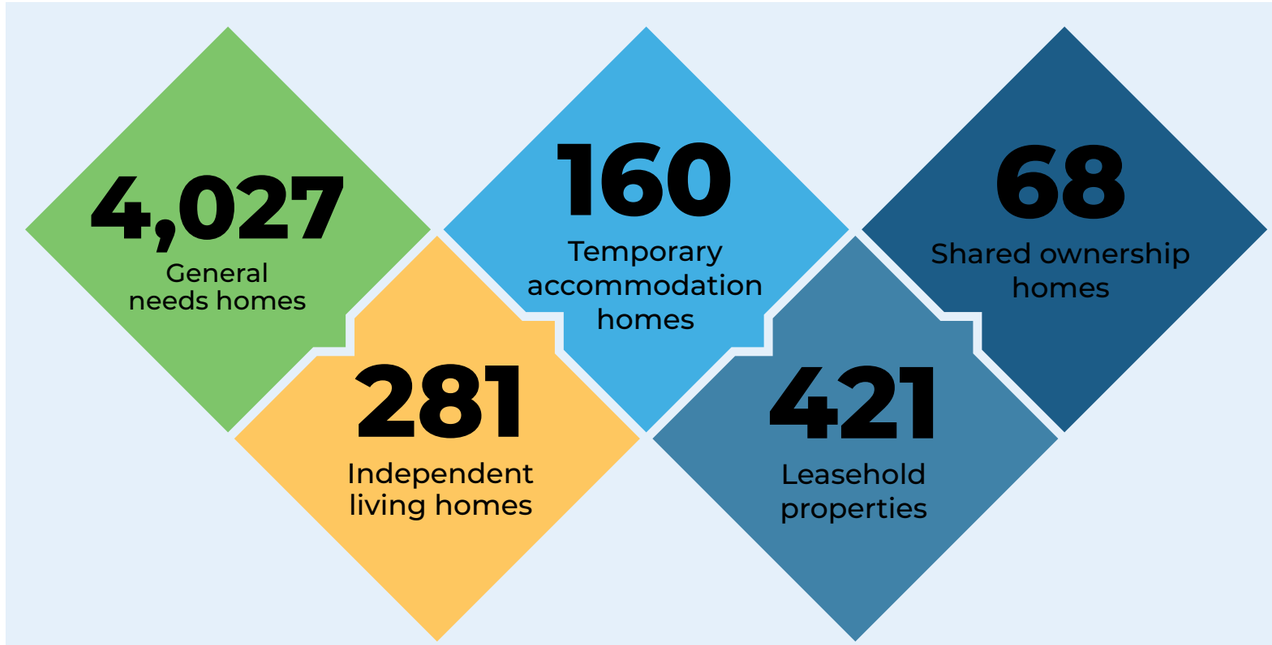
| | DDC 2025/26 | DDC 2024/25 | National median |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 properties | 45 | 34.7 | 55.9 |
| Number of Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 properties | 8.7 | 4.7 | 12.1 |
| Stage 1 complaints responded to in target time | 96.5% | 93.5% | 94.0% |
| Stage 2 complaints responded to in target time | 100.0% | 100.0% | 93.6% |
| Number of ASB cases per 1,000 properties | 107.8 | 104.3 | 35.6 |
| Number of ASB cases that involved hate incidents per 1,000 properties | 0.4 | 1.4 | 0.7 |
| Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard | 3.4% | 2.5% | 0.8% |
| Non-emergency repairs completed in target timescale | 97.4% | 91.4% | 85.49% |
| Emergency repairs completed in target timescale | 100.0% | 100.0% | 96.1% |
| Gas Safety checks | 99.9% | 99.9% | 99.94% |
| Fire safety checks | 100.0% | 94.0% | 100.0% |
| Asbestos safety checks | 100.0% | 92.7% | 100.0% |
| Water safety checks | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Lift safety checks | 82.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |





# Our Homes

**At the end of March 2026, Dover District Council owned and managed 4,957 homes, an increase from 4,828 the previous year. This included:**






The increase reflects ongoing investment in expanding housing provision, particularly through new affordable homes for rent and homeownership, and temporary accommodation acquisitions.

During the year we added 88 new homes to our portfolio, including 46 new general needs homes, 17 temporary accommodation properties and 25 shared ownership homes.

This is 33 more than the number of new homes delivered in 2024/25.

During the year, 15 homes were sold through the Right to Buy. This is a similar number to the previous year. Despite this, we were able to increase the number of homes available for local people, resulting in 73 more homes overall.

# Tenancy Management

## Supporting Sustainable Tenancies

**Tenant satisfaction with our overall landlord service remained strong at 77.4%, maintaining the positive performance achieved in the previous year.**




The number of flexible tenancies reduced significantly as tenants transferred to more secure lifetime tenancies, reflecting the Council's commitment and strategy to providing long-term housing stability for residents.

We also introduced a programme of tenancy reviews, completing 540 individual visits and reviews during the year. These reviews help ensure that our tenancy records remain accurate, to prevent tenancy fraud, and that households receive any support they may need.

## Housing allocations and lettings

**Demand for affordable housing remains extremely high.**

These figures demonstrate the continued demand for affordable housing across the district.

The average time taken to re-let a property increased to 63 days. This reflects the growing complexity of some vacant properties requiring additional investment before re-letting, as well as efforts to ensure homes meet our standards before new tenants move in.

We also approved 43 mutual exchanges, helping tenants move to homes that better met their needs.

At the end of the year:

- 1,674 households were registered on the Housing Register
- We received an average of 200 new housing applications each month to join the housing register
- 99.97% of our homes were occupied
- 261 new lettings were completed




## Rent collection and financial support

**Rent income continues to play a vital role in funding repairs, improvements and the services we provide to tenants. Every rent payment helps us maintain homes, invest in our neighbourhoods and support the delivery of housing services.**

**£26.7 Million**
Rent was collected during 2025/26

Rent arrears remained low at
**1.49%**

**621**
Tenants received support from our Benefits and Money Advice Team

Our low level of rent arrears reflects both the commitment of tenants to keeping their accounts up to date and the support available to those experiencing financial difficulties. While fewer tenants received advice compared with the previous year due to staffing challenges, rent arrears remained considerably below national benchmarking levels at 2.47%.

As we continue to strengthen the Benefits and Money Advice Team, we expect to provide support to an increasing number of tenants during 2026/27, helping residents maximise their income and maintain successful tenancies.

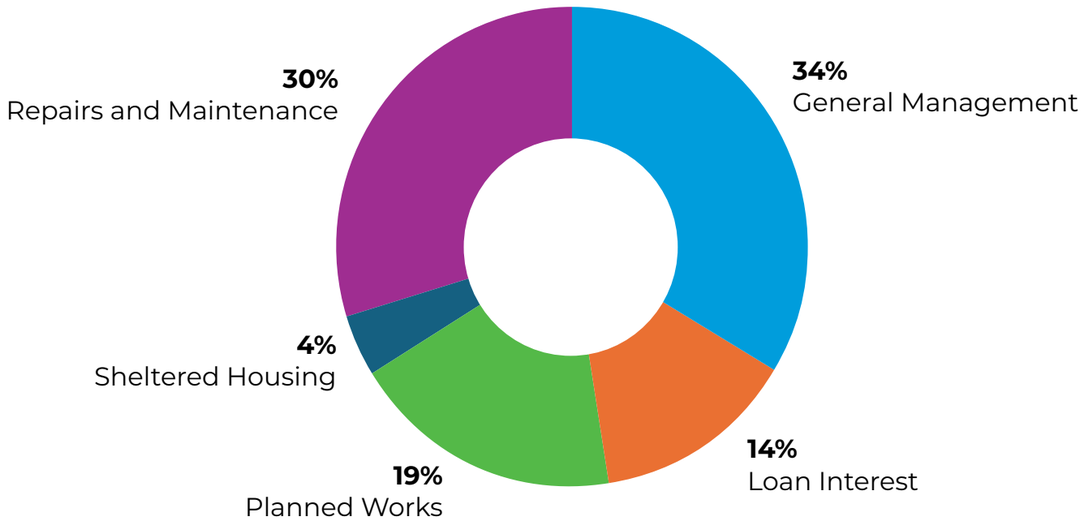


## How we spend your rent

**Your rent plays a vital role in supporting the services we provide. It helps pay for repairs, safety checks, neighbourhood services, housing management and improvements to homes.**

Every pound of rent collected is carefully reinvested to deliver quality services and ensures our homes remain safe and well maintained.

To give you an idea, the chart below shows how the average weekly rent charged in 2025/26 was used across different areas of the Housing Service.




- **General management (34%)**

Costs associated with the day-to-day management of council housing services, including housing staff, tenancy management, rent collection, customer services, housing advice, and supporting tenants in their homes.

- **Loan interest (14%)**

Costs associated with borrowing of funds to invest in council homes and build new affordable housing.

- **Planned Works (19%)**

Costs associated with major improvements to homes and communal areas, such as replacing kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, windows, doors and heating systems, helping to keep homes safe, modern and energy efficient.

- **Sheltered housing (4%)**

Costs associated with the management and upkeep of sheltered housing schemes for older residents, including communal facilities, housing support and maintaining shared areas.

- **Repairs and maintenance (30%)**

Costs associated with the day-to-day repairs and maintenance to tenants' homes and communal areas, helping to keep homes and neighbourhoods safe, secure and in good condition.





## Tackling tenancy fraud

**Protecting council housing from misuse remains one of our priorities, helping to ensure that homes are available for those who need them most.**

Tenancy Fraud reduces the number of homes available for people waiting for social housing and makes it harder to allocate homes fairly to eligible households.

By investigating suspected fraud and recovering properties that are being misused, we can return homes to people in genuine housing need and make the best use of the homes we have.

During the year:

| | |
|---|---|
| **22** | Suspected tenancy fraud cases were reported |
| **22** | Investigations were opened |
| **20** | Investigations were concluded |
| **2** | Properties were recovered following evidence of unlawful subletting |

# Keeping Communities Safe



## Anti-social behaviour and hate crime

**Everyone has the right to feel safe in their home and neighbourhood. We take reports of anti-social behaviour and hate incidents seriously and work with residents and partner agencies to prevent issues from escalating, protect those affected, and take appropriate action where necessary.**

We received:

- 489 reports of anti-social behaviour, an increase on the 467 reports last year.
  - Of which, 2 reports involved hate incidents, a reduction on the 6 reported last year.

Despite the slight increase in reports received since last year, satisfaction with how we handle anti-social behaviour improved from 54.0% to 56.5%.

Our Housing Teams continued to work closely with residents, Kent Police and partner agencies to investigate reports, gather evidence and take enforcement action where appropriate.

## Domestic abuse

**Everyone deserves to feel safe in their home. We are committed to supporting tenants affected by domestic abuse and work closely with specialist partner agencies to provide advice, support and practical assistance.**

Our priority is to help victims access the support they need and, where necessary, secure safe housing outcomes.

During 2025/26:

- 23 domestic abuse cases were reported, an increase on 13 reported last year.
  - 20 cases were successfully closed
  - 3 cases remained open at year end

While the number of reported cases increased, this may partly reflect greater awareness of the support available and increased trust in the Council, resulting in more residents feeling able to seek help and report concerns. Our officers worked alongside specialist agencies to support victims and help secure safe housing outcomes where required.

## Evictions

**We are committed to helping tenants sustain their tenancies wherever possible. Our approach focuses on early intervention, advice, support and working with tenants to address issues before they escalate.**

However, where tenancy breaches occur, or where all reasonable attempts to resolve issues have been unsuccessful, we may take legal action to recover possession of a property. Eviction is always a last resort.

During 2025/26:

- 5 evictions were carried out
  - 2 related to rent arrears
  - 3 related to anti-social behaviour

This represents a reduction from the previous year and reflects our commitment to tenancy sustainment, providing support at an early stage, and using legal action only where it is necessary and proportionate.



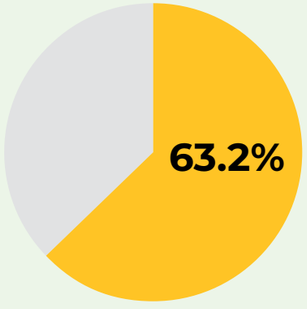
# Neighbourhoods And Estates

**We know that the quality of neighbourhoods and communal areas plays an important role in people's enjoyment of their home.**

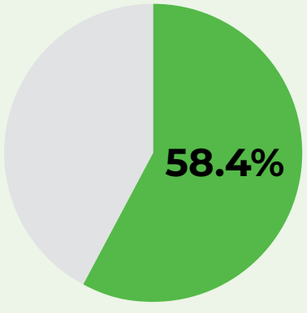


We are committed to maintaining safe, clean and welcoming communities, and work closely with residents, contractors and partner agencies to address environmental issues and improve local neighbourhoods.

Tenant satisfaction increased:




**Satisfaction with communal area**




**Satisfaction with neighbourhood management**

To help keep neighbourhoods clean, safe and well maintained, Housing staff carried out 1,569 estate and neighbourhood inspections during 2025/26.

These inspections helped identify and resolve issues such as fly-tipping, abandoned items, grounds maintenance concerns, parking issues and other environmental problems, supporting improvements across our estates and communities.

You can help keep your neighbourhood and community safe, clean and well maintained by taking part in one of our Estate Walkabouts. Estate Walkabouts give you and others the opportunity to meet with Housing staff, raise local concerns, identify improvement opportunities and help shape priorities for their neighbourhood.



# Repairs And Maintenance

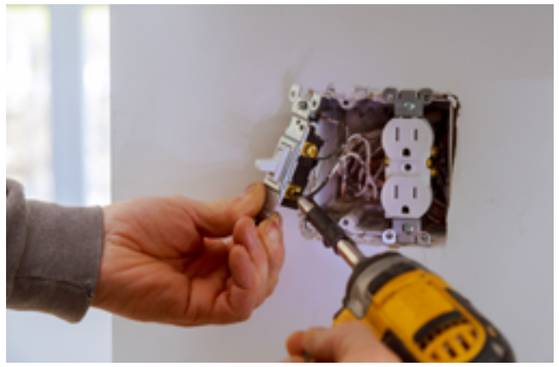
**Providing an effective repairs service remains one of the most important services we deliver. A well-maintained home is essential to tenants' safety, comfort and wellbeing, and we are committed to carrying out repairs quickly and efficiently.**

During the year, we continued to focus on improving response times, reducing waiting periods for routine repairs, and ensuring emergency repairs were attended to as a priority.

While demand for repairs fluctuates from year to year, our aim remains to provide a reliable, high-quality service that meets tenants' expectations and keeps homes in good condition.

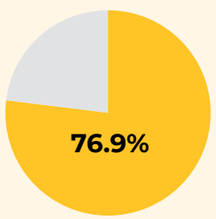
During 2025/26:

- £2.8 million was spent on repairs, compared to £3 million last year.
- 9,831 routine repairs were completed, compared to 12,566 last year.
- Emergency repairs were completed within target 100% of the time, the same as last year.
- 96.9% of routine repairs were completed within target, an improvement on 90.4% reported last year.

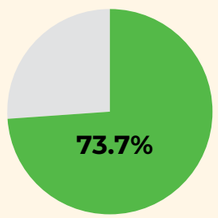


The average time taken to complete a routine repair improved significantly, reducing from 16.77 days last year to just over 11 days in 2025/26. This reflects our continued focus on delivering repairs more quickly and improving the overall service provided to tenants.

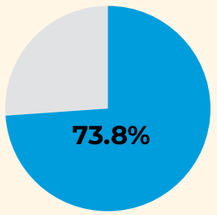
Tenant satisfaction with the repairs service remained strong:




**Overall Repairs Satisfaction**




**Satisfaction with repair timescale**




**Satisfaction that homes are well maintained**

While these results are encouraging, we recognise that there is still more to do. Improving the repairs experience for tenants, including communication, responsiveness and service quality, will remain a key priority during the coming year.

# Investing In Homes

**Investing in tenants' homes is essential to keeping properties safe, well maintained and fit for the future.**

Each year, we carry out a programme of planned improvements to replace ageing components and improve the quality, comfort and energy efficiency of our homes.

During 2025/26 we completed 995 planned home improvements across our housing stock.

Although this was lower than the previous year, investment was redirected to stock condition surveys. Currently we have completed surveys on 91.8% of our homes. This is important programme is helping us better plan future improvements and target investment where it is needed most.

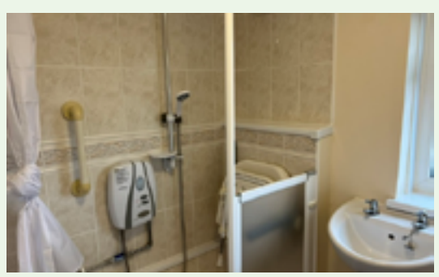


## Disabled adaptations

**Helping residents live independently remains a priority. Through our disabled adaptations programme, we can make changes to properties that improve accessibility and support residents with disabilities, mobility needs and long-term health conditions.**

During 2025/26:

- 232 adaptation requests were received
- 219 adaptations were completed, and increase on 189 in 2024/25
- £407,857 was invested in adaptations, an increase on £378,000 spent in 2024/25



# Building Safety

**Keeping your home safe is our highest priority. We carry out thousands of safety checks, inspections and assessments each year.**

To make sure our homes are safe, well maintained and meet all legal and regulatory requirements.

These activities help us identify and address potential risks, giving tenants and leaseholders confidence that their homes remain safe places to live.

Performance remained strong across our key building safety measures:

**99.9%**
Gas Safety Compliance

**100%**
Fire Risk Assessment Compliance

**100%**
Asbestos Inspection Compliance

**100%**
Legionella Compliance

During the year, we also completed:

- 4,164 gas safety inspections
- 1,507 electrical installation condition reports
- 1,518 smoke and heat alarm replacements
- 362 carbon monoxide alarm replacements

This work forms a vital part of our commitment to keeping residents safe and ensuring our homes continue to meet the highest safety standards. While performance remains strong, we will continue to invest in building safety and maintain a proactive approach to compliance and risk management.

## Damp and mould

**We are committed to identifying and resolving damp and mould issues quickly to help ensure tenants live in safe, healthy homes.**

We encourage residents to report concerns as soon as possible so that appropriate investigations and remedial works can be carried out.

During the year:

- 370 damp and mould cases were reported
- 92% were investigated within 14 days
- £136,812 was spent addressing issues

The increase in reported cases reflects our proactive approach to identifying damp and mould through tenancy audits and stock condition surveys, helping us find issues earlier and respond more quickly to tenants' concerns.







# Tenant Engagement

**We believe tenants and leaseholders should have a genuine opportunity to influence the services they receive.**

We are committed to listening to your views, involving you in decision-making and using your feedback to help shape policies, services and future priorities.

During 2025/26:

- 1,637 tenants and leaseholders engaged with us through consultations, community and neighbourhood events, and surveys.
- 4 consultations were opened
- 4 community events were held
- 9 formal tenant meetings took place
- 7 policies and strategies were reviewed with tenant input
- 2 scrutiny and performance challenge sessions were conducted

The feedback and insight provided by tenants and leaseholders helped shape service improvements, influence key housing decisions and ensure that residents' voices remain at the heart of our housing services.

You can find out more about how you can get involved by scanning the QR code of visiting:

www.dover.gov.uk/getinvolved.



# Complaints And Learning

**We view complaints as valuable feedback and an opportunity to learn, improve and deliver better services. Listening to residents' concerns helps us understand where we have fallen short, put things right where possible, and identify changes that will improve the experience of tenants and leaseholders.**

During the year:

| | Number of complaint | Responce time (within target timescales) |
|---|---|---|
| Stage 1 Complaint | 201 | 97.4% |
| Stage 1 Complaint | 39 | 100% |

Average response times also improved significantly, reducing to:

- 10 working days for Stage 1 complaints
- 22 working days for Stage 2 complaints

These results demonstrate significant improvements in our complaint handling performance and our ability to respond to concerns promptly. However, satisfaction with our approach to complaint handling fell to 35.3% from the previous year (48.3%). This suggests that responding within target timescales alone is not enough.

We recognise the need to improve the quality of our communication, achieve better outcomes for residents, and more clearly demonstrate how we use feedback and complaints to learn and improve our services. These areas will remain a key focus during the coming year.

# Looking Ahead: Our Priorities For 2026/27

**We remain committed to providing safe, well-maintained homes and high-quality services that meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders.**

Over the coming year, we will continue to build on the progress made during 2025/26, while addressing areas where residents have told us they want to see further improvements.

Several important projects and initiatives are planned for 2026/27 to help us strengthen services, meet regulatory requirements, invest in our homes and neighbourhoods, and ensure residents have a greater influence over decisions that affect them.

These priorities have been shaped by your feedback, alongside service performance and regulatory expectations. We have listened to what you and others have told us through surveys, complaints, compliments, resident meetings and other engagement activities. Your views help us understand what matters to you and where we need to improve. By combining this feedback with information about how our services are performing and the standards we are expected to meet, we can focus our efforts on delivering the services that are most important to tenants and communities.

Our priorities for the year ahead are to:

- Deliver a new Responsive Repairs Policy, setting out clearly what tenants can expect from the repairs service and the standards we will work to.
- Review and update our HRA Business Plan to ensure it supports investment in existing homes and services over the next 30 years.
- Produce and implement a new Asset Management Strategy to set out how we maintain, improve and invest in our homes and housing assets.
- Improve the quality of our neighbourhoods and communal areas through regular inspections, improvement programmes, helping to build cleaner, safer and more sustainable communities.
- Strengthen complaint handling by improving how we respond to concerns and ensuring we learn more effectively from tenant feedback.
- Establish a Resident Scrutiny Group to review performance, challenge decisions and hold us to account.
- Complete an assessment of our tenant engagement service and introduce improvements to ensure tenants have meaningful opportunities to influence decisions.
- Work towards and achieve TPAS Landlord Accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to high-quality tenant engagement and involvement.
- Consult on and launch a new Resident Engagement Strategy in 2027 that reflects tenant priorities and sets out how residents can shape our services.
- Enhance communication with residents by providing clearer information and improving opportunities for residents to get involved and have their voices heard.

By delivering these commitments, we aim to provide better services, strengthen accountability, invest in our homes and communities, and ensure tenants and leaseholders remain at the heart of everything we do.

# Thank You

Lastly, we would like to thank every resident who shared their views with us during 2025/26, whether that was completing a survey, attending one of our events or submitting a complaint or compliment to us. Your feedback and views help us to improve our services and ensure that residents remain at the heart of everything we do.

