

# 2020/21 ANNUAL REPORT

## Welcome to our 2020/21 Annual Report for the Housing Service

**After an extraordinary year, I am delighted to pay tribute to the commitment and resilience of both our staff and residents.**

Our housing team continued to work tremendously hard to maintain services and provide vital support to local people. Thanks to good neighbours supporting one another

through the challenges of lockdown, communities have emerged from the pandemic even stronger.

With restrictions eased, we are looking to the future with optimism. We're developing plans to improve our services, invest in your homes and neighbourhoods, build more affordable properties and reduce carbon emissions. Read more about our future plans and our achievements over the past year inside this report.

**"The strength of compassion and community spirit has been remarkable"**



**Cllr Kelsie Learney**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management



Produced in partnership with Winchester City Council tenants and leaseholders



**Winchester**  
City Council

# A Year In The Life...

A month by month look at some of our key achievements, success and milestones

April  
2020

To get 'everyone in' during lockdown we leased a 10-bed hostel and also worked with The Wessex Hotel. During the year 68 rough sleepers received emergency accommodation.



May  
2020

Works to improve the energy efficiency of our two Swedish homes in Bramdean included new roofs, doors, windows and insulation.



July  
2020

New homes at Rowlings Road, Weeke completed. In total 9 new affordable homes were delivered throughout the year.



**51** trees planted throughout the year as part of our tree planting scheme.



June  
2020

Aug  
2020

More residents supported to take part in online meetings to help us run the housing service.



Sept  
2020

Improvements to sheltered housing included new fire doors, new signage, lighting, flooring and redecoration work.



# A Year In The Life...



**Oct  
2020**

To achieve our ambitions of becoming carbon neutral by 2024 we conducted a digital survey of tenants.

**Nov  
2020**

Fire safety information survey sent to residents living in blocks.

**Fire door  
keep  
shut**

More online services launched for leaseholders, including an online portal to access account information, make payments, report block repairs and antisocial behaviour.



Estate Improvements project enhanced the communal garden at Claylands Road, Bishops Waltham.

**Jan  
2021**

We reviewed our complaints process and are working with tenants on a project plan for improvements.

**Complaint**

**Dec  
2020**

**Feb  
2021**

Successful court case for fly tipping with two people each fined over £730.

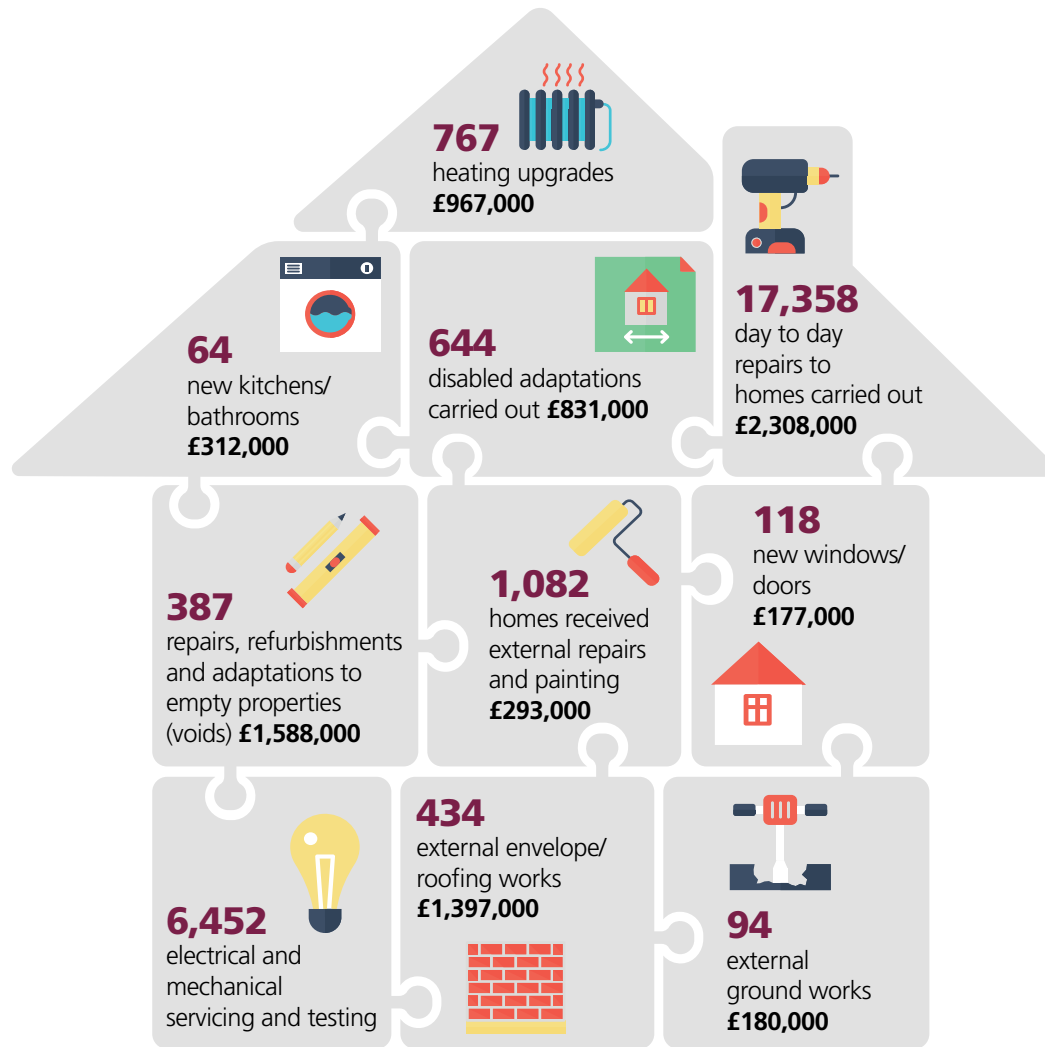


**Mar  
2021**

100% of our homes met Decent Homes standard at year-end.

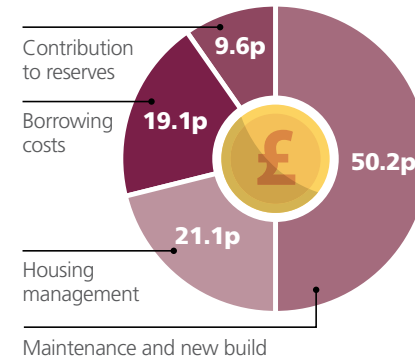


# Investing in your homes

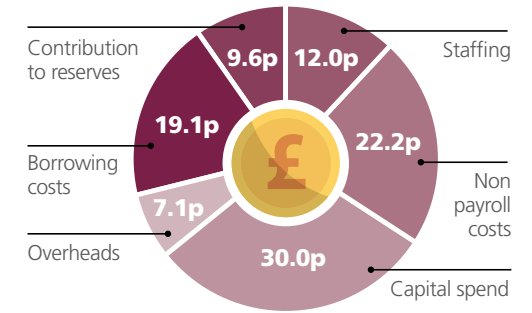


## Where we spend each £1

Where it was spent



What it was spent on



## Our performance

You can see how we performed in comparison to last year and how we compare with other councils nationwide.

	2019/20	2020/21	Average for other councils (Housemark core benchmarking data) 2020/21
Rent arrears (as a % of total rent due)	2.30%	2.63%	4.68%
Average time to complete a repair	7.7 days	12.9 days	11.8 days
Tenants satisfaction with their neighbourhood	85%	85%	83%
Tenants overall satisfaction with the housing service	87%	87%	82%
Average re-let time for Council homes	13.6 days	27.72 days	52.11 days
Average cost per property of Housing Management	£229.78	£281.51	£212.04
Average direct cost per property for responsive repairs and empty homes	£771.95	£985.74	£1,544.20



### Looking ahead

We plan to further develop our fire safety and building safety programmes and also work towards our carbon neutral targets. We have awarded a new heating services contract to CCS (to replace PH Jones).



# Looking after your neighbourhood

We work to keep our neighbourhoods looking clean and green. Our Neighbourhood Services Team undertake routine inspections to check communal areas are safe, clean and well maintained.

**5,249** inspections carried out to general needs, sheltered schemes, temporary accommodation, garage sites and open spaces.

## Community safety

tackling ASB (antisocial behaviour)

- 24** Referrals to the Assessment and Mediation Service
- 6** Number of Notices of Seeking Possession
- 8** Number of approved Management Moves

## Fly-tipping

- 10** 10 fixed penalty notices issued
- 12** Cases of fly-tipping awaiting court (by the end of March 2021)

- Looking ahead:**
- Estate improvements will take place at Chiltern Court, The Valley, The Gardens in Hambledon, Orchard Close, Brittany House, Bartholomew Close, St Bedes Court, Pound Road, Fraser Road and Wolfe Close.
  - We will conduct a survey to find your views on how we manage communal areas.



## Estate improvements

- **Trussell Crescent, Weeke**  
Improved parking
- **Garnier Park, Wickham**  
Improved parking
- **Claylands Road, Bishops Waltham**  
Improvements to communal garden and outside areas



- **Milford House, Winchester**  
Raised beds and hedging
- **White Wings House, Denmead**  
Security fencing
- **27 Eastgate Street, Winchester**  
Garden improvements

We invested **£119,784** at 6 schemes:

# Developing new homes


With such high demand for council housing there is a huge need for more affordable homes to be developed across the district – both to rent and to buy at affordable rates.

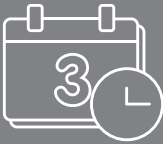
Last year we completed 9 new homes

- **Rowlings Road, Weeke**  
Three 2-bedroom family homes and four 1-bedroom flats for affordable rent.
- **Dolphin Hill, Twyford**  
Two new energy-efficient family homes for affordable rent.



## Our waiting list

**1,452**   
Number of households registered on the waiting list (31/3/21)

**3 years 10 months**   
Average wait in band 3 for a 3-bedroom house

## Lettings

**591**   
Number of lettings new to social housing

**414**   
Number of lettings to existing tenants

# Listening to you

## Tenant involvement

Covid forced us to adapt our planned activities last year. Instead we carried out a telephone survey and then provided support and training to enable tenants to participate in online meetings.

## Lessons learned

After residents told us they faced difficulties getting through on the phone we took immediate action by making more staff available to answer phones.

## Looking ahead



We want to increase and widen our tenant engagement and improve induction for residents who want to get involved or become Committee members. We also plan to establish a Steering Group with residents to monitor our tenant involvement service against the Tenant Compact and government recommendations.

## Complaint stats 2020/21

We know we don't always get things right, that's why we encourage you to tell us if something is wrong so we can put it right.

We have set up a focus group with tenants to help us develop a housing complaints policy. This will set out clearly how to make a complaint, the process followed, and when you should receive a response. We are also looking at staff training, ensuring we are more transparent on complaints and we are working to improve our response time.

**139** total complaints received 2020/21

**60%** Closed within 10 days

**40%** Not closed within 10 days

**70** Complaints upheld

**32** Complaints partially upheld

**37** Complaints not upheld

**7** Complaints escalated to stage 2

We conducted a survey asking everyone who has made a complaint about the housing team in the last 18 months to provide feedback about their experience of the service.

# Sheltered housing

## Digital inclusion



We've supported tenants to make use of their scheme Wi-Fi by providing basic training and loaning out tablets free of charge.



## Investment into homes

Schemes have received new signage, redecoration, new lighting and flooring. (White Wings, Richard Moss House, Matilda Place and Makins Court will receive work next year).



## Support for new tenants

We've introduced viewings of properties by our sheltered housing officers to help new tenants check if a potential home is suitable for their needs and for us to identify if any aids or adaptations are needed.

## Support during Covid-19

**787** sheltered tenants received phone calls to check everyone was OK. We provided support where needed, including collecting groceries and prescriptions.

**73** residents (with no family or support in place) still receive ongoing support from us.

**56** people benefit from our Wellbeing Service.



## Looking ahead

Our key priorities for the year ahead include improving accessibility at all our schemes, restarting our programme of activities and upgrading the digital alarm service across all our sheltered housing schemes.



# Tenancy sustainment support

We're here to help everyone keep their home by providing advice and support on issues ranging from budgeting, dealing with debt, claiming benefits, mental health and wellbeing, drug and alcohol support services.

364 people received support from our Tenancy Sustainment team during the year, including help to maximise their income. This year we have helped tenants in financial hardship to claim:

- One off payments worth **£65,973.89**
- Discretionary Housing Payments worth **£4,334.19**



Thank you for supporting me through a really tough time. I felt unsafe in my home and the Tenancy Sustainment Officer aided my move into new accommodation. She liaised with utility companies and helped me settle in. Thanks to the practical and emotional support I received, I felt able to move forward with my life." **Sarah**





## Looking ahead

We plan to enhance the range of support available to help more tenants stay in their homes. This includes commissioning mental health services and also introducing an Assist Grant for tenants in financial difficulty, and those who need short-term assistance.

Get in touch

Winchester City Council  
Freepost Plus RTLH-KXUA-SEEC  
Tenant Involvement  
Winchester  
SO23 9ZT

Freephone: **0800 716 987**  
Email: [tenantvoice@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:tenantvoice@winchester.gov.uk)  
[winchester.gov.uk/tenantvoice](http://winchester.gov.uk/tenantvoice)

 WinchesterTenants  
 @WinchesterCity