

Information produced by  
Durham City Homes, 17 Claypath, Durham DH1 1RH

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

العربية (Arabic) (中文 (繁體字)) (Chinese) اردو (Urdu)  
polski (Polish) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi) Español (Spanish)  
বাংলা (Bengali) हिन्दी (Hindi) Deutsch (German)  
Français (French) Türkçe (Turkish) Melayu (Malay)

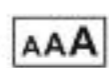
Housing Services: 0191 301 8470  
durhamcityhomesadmin@durham.gov.uk



Braille



Audio



Large Print



# Durham City Homes Annual Report 2010/11

Altogether better council housing in Durham City





## Contents

1. Welcome and Introduction.....	3
2. About our Homes .....	4
3. How we developed this Report.....	6
4. Involving You .....	8
5. The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) National Standards: .....	10
● Standard 1: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	
● Standard 2: Home	
● Standard 3: Tenancy	
● Standard 4: Neighbourhood and Community	
● Standard 5: Value for Money	
● Standard 6: Governance and Financial Viability	
6. A closer look at our performance – facts and figures.....	46
7. How we spend your money .....	51
8. Further information & how to contact us.....	54
9. Your 2011/12 Local Service Standards.....	55



## 1. Welcome & Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to Durham City Homes' Annual Report for 2010/11. Inside you can find out about the work of Durham City Homes, including information about how well services are being delivered and areas for improvement in the year ahead.

Despite many challenges during the last year, including the harsh winter weather and economic climate, colleagues have made significant progress in delivering good quality services that matter the most to you. You can find out more about this progress throughout this report.

You will all know that the County Council is considering the future management and financing options for all the council houses it owns across the County. Hopefully, you will all have had a chance to have your say on this and I am looking forward to the final outcome of this work later in the year.

Finally, I hope you find this report useful and interesting.

**Cllr Clive Robson**  
**Council Cabinet**  
**Member for Housing**



During the last year, Durham City Homes' Tenants Panel has made a lot of progress, working with staff and partners, to improve the services delivered by the Council on your behalf.

This report tells you about some of the work that has been done during the last year as well as some of the things we want the staff at Durham City Homes to look at in the future.

Many members of the Panel have been involved in specific projects like developing your Local Service Standards, this Annual Report and the Stock Options Appraisal Project. Members of the Stock Options Customer Working Group talk about their involvement on page 8.

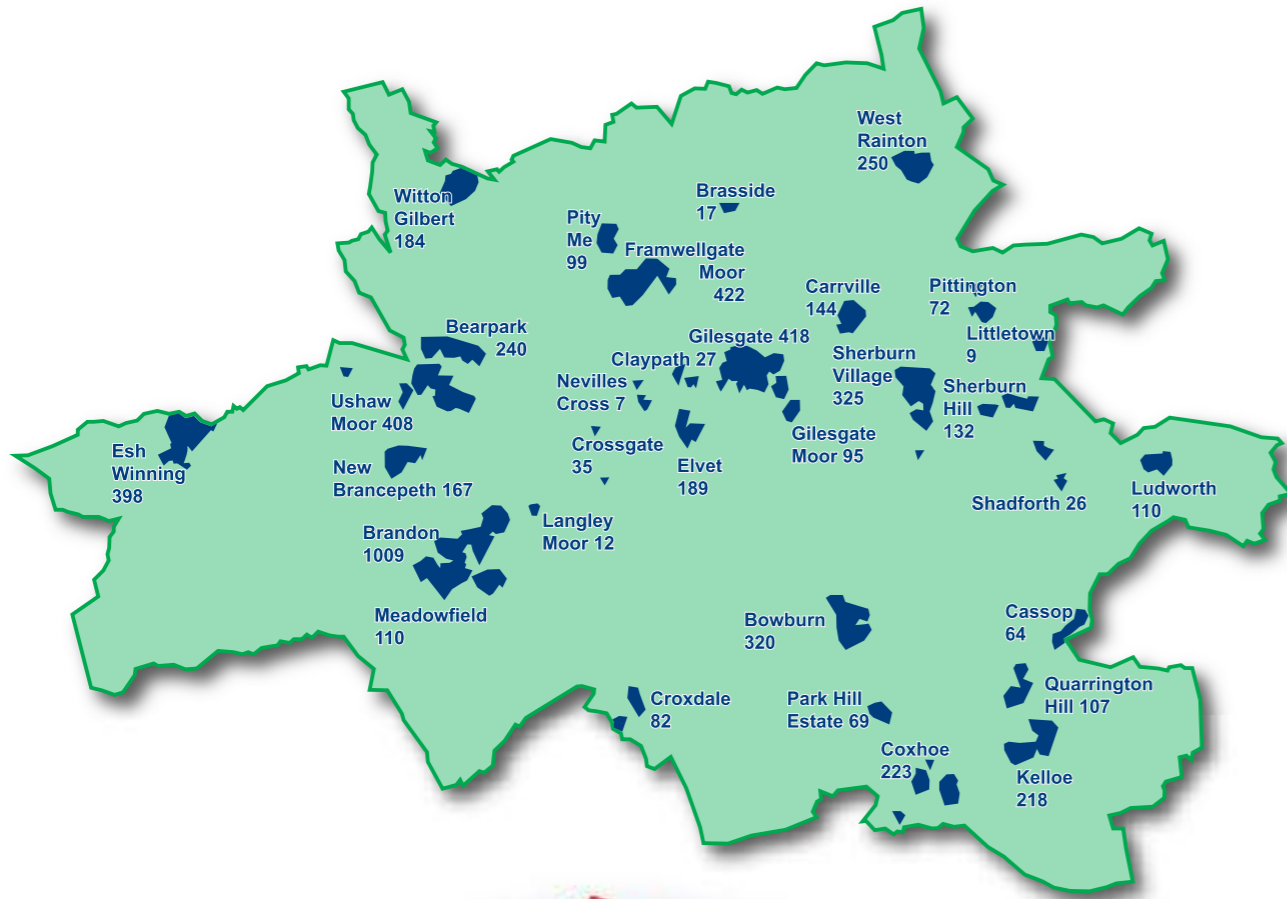
I would like to encourage you to join myself, and the Panel, in helping shape the services delivered to tenants and leaseholders. There are lots of other ways you can get involved. Please get in touch with staff at Durham City Homes to find out more.

**John Kelley**  
**Chair Durham City Homes Tenants Panel**

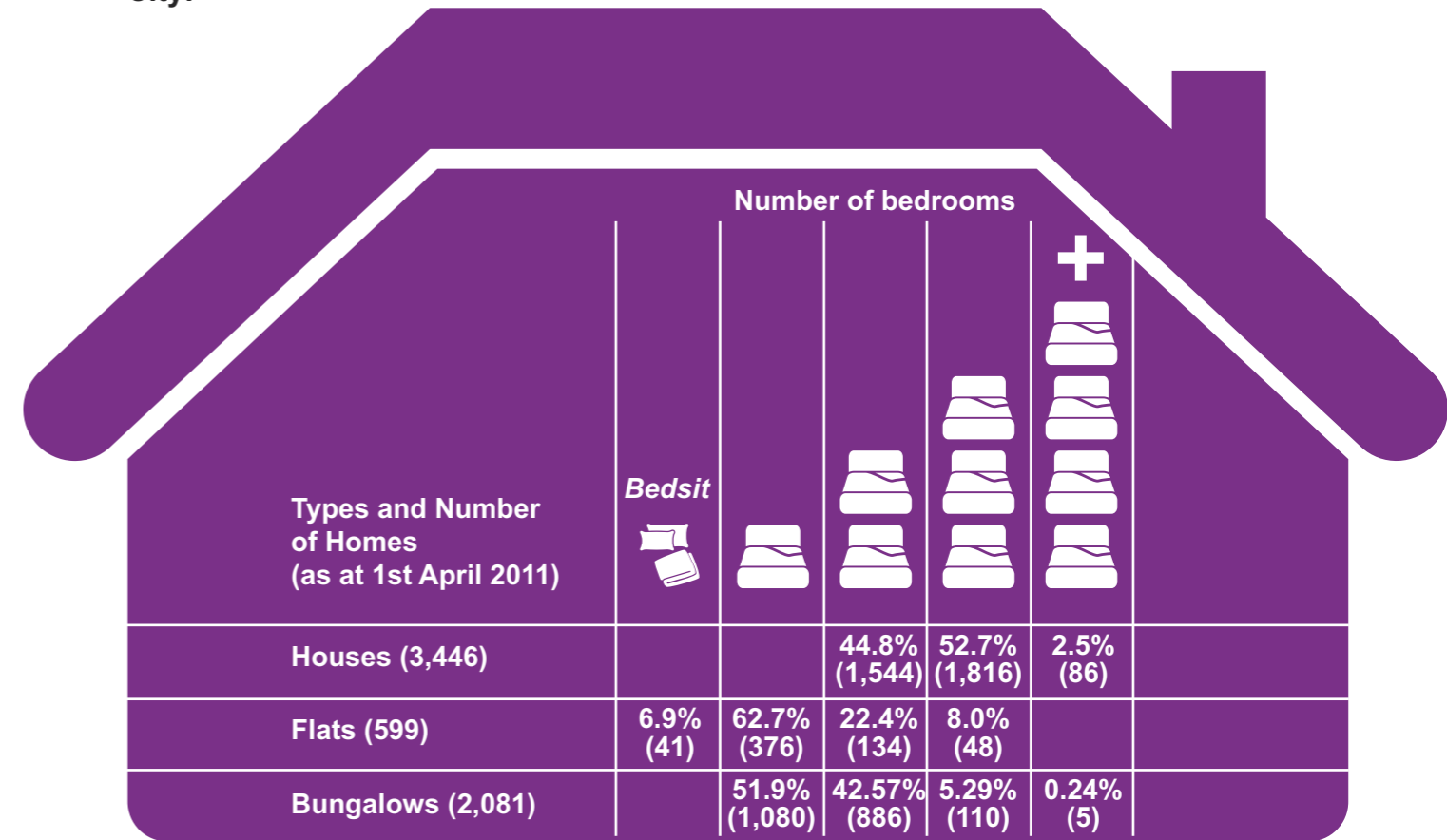
## 2. About our Homes

**Durham City Homes** is the part of the County Council which manages council housing in the Durham City area. We manage about 6,100 homes spread across 33 discrete locations. The biggest concentration of housing is in the village of Brandon, with over 1,000 homes. The other larger areas with council housing include Framwellgate Moor, Esh Winning, Gilesgate and Ushaw Moor.

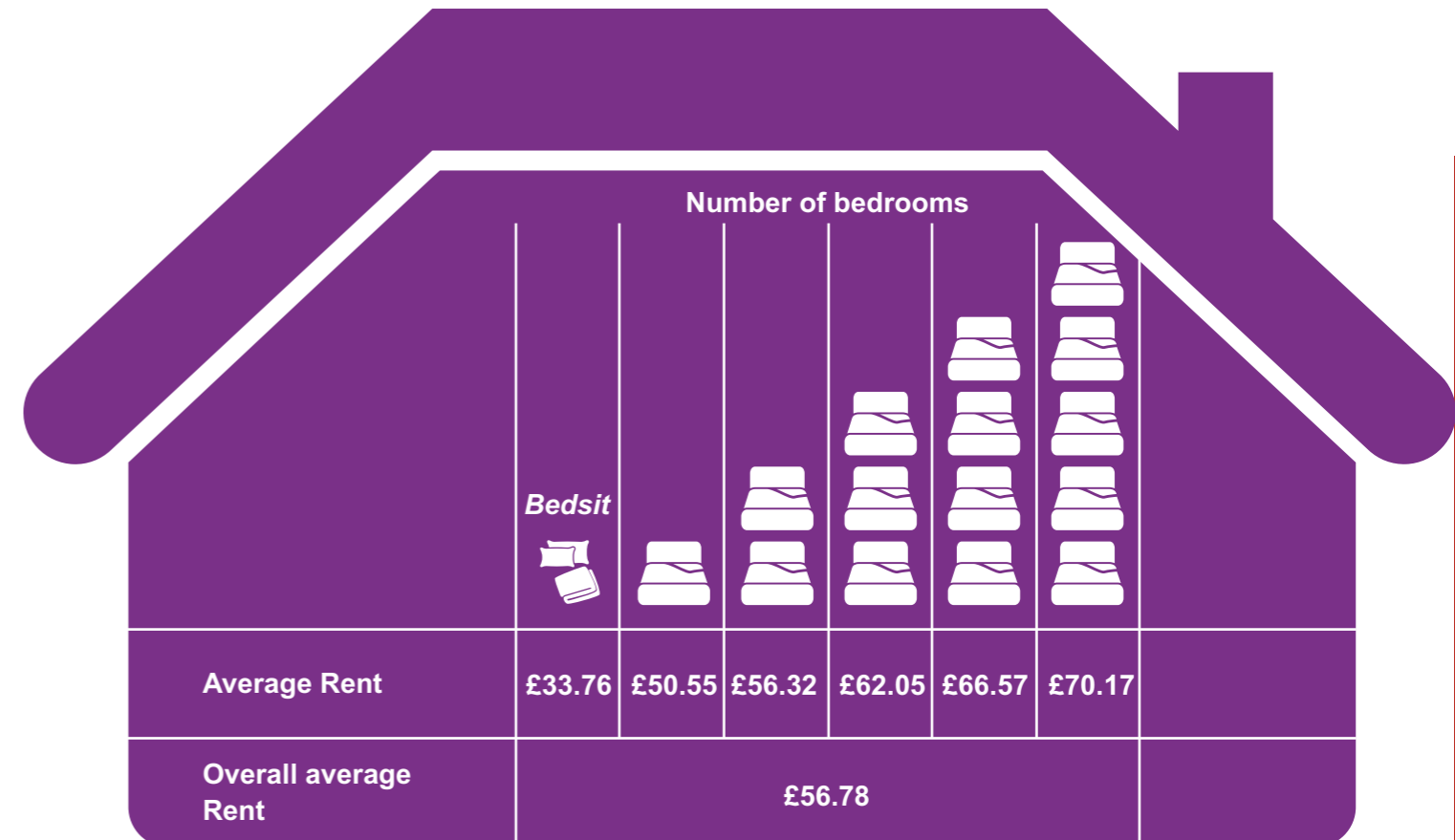
The map below shows the homes we manage across the City by village:



The chart below shows the total number and types of homes we manage across the City:



The average weekly rent for each of our homes in 2010/11 is shown below:



### 3. How we developed this Report

**Customer feedback and involvement** is a continuous process which helps us to decide, with you, what our priorities for the future should be and what service improvements we should make for tenants and leaseholders. It was therefore essential that tenants were involved at every step in the development of this report.

The road map below shows how we developed this report.

In October 2010 we asked customers what they thought of our services and what their priorities were for the future.

Our Service Improvement Groups (SIGs) and Tenants Panel considered this feedback.

We held our Tenants Matter Open Day to enable customers to talk to us about their priorities for improvement.

We held workshops with our SIGs and Tenants Panel to discuss our performance against the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) National Standards and our Local Offers.

We commissioned an external inspection of our Lettings and Estates and Tenancy Services to help identify our strengths and areas for improvement.

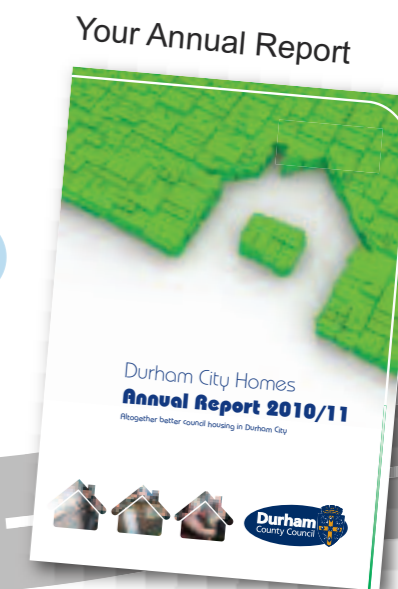
Our SIGs and Tenants Panel considered all the feedback received and helped redraft our Local Offers and priorities for improvement for the year ahead.

We published the draft Local Offers online and wrote to all tenants on our involvement database asking them for their feedback on our draft Local Offers.

We held a workshop session with members of our SIGs and Tenants Panel to discuss how they would like this information presented in their Annual Report and what else they would like us to include in it. The groups looked at a wide range of other providers' reports and decided what worked for them.

Members of the Tenants Panel met with us to talk about their priorities and areas for improvement. These are included in this report.

Tenant representatives considered the draft report. They made a few changes to it and agreed it was in a format they liked. We went to print!



# 4. Involving You

**Involving you** in the services that matter the most to you, other tenants and leaseholders is key to providing a good quality and high performing housing service.

We have developed a range of opportunities for you to get involved, ranging from meetings and specific projects through to completing questionnaires or just simply giving us your feedback. The range of options is developing all the time. The bullet points below show the current options available to you. Please get in touch to find out more.

## Your options for getting involved:

- Attend events or drop-ins
- Be part of a Focus Group
- Be on a Service Improvement Group
- Become a member of our Non-Executive Board
- Fill in a survey
- Go on an Estate Walkabout
- Join the Tenant's Panel
- Join the Reader's Panel
- Join the Reality Checkers
- Join a Residents Group
- Join a working group
- Make a complaint or compliment
- Make a suggestion
- Read Tenant Matters
- Register on our Involvement Database

## Getting involved in "Stock Options"

During the last year, a number of tenants have spent a lot of their own time helping shape the future management and financing of Council homes within County Durham as part of the Stock Options Appraisal Customer Working Group.

Your representatives on this group tell their story:

### "Stock Options" my story...

Paula Muir, one of our newly involved tenants recently sat down with two of our more experienced involved tenants Kathryn Paylor-Bent and John Grantham to talk about why they became involved in Durham City Homes and their role in the Stock Options Appraisal process.

#### 1. How did you first become involved in the work of Durham City Homes?

**Kathryn** - "Reading the Tenant Matters newsletter, I was interested in Mystery Shopping and the Aids and Adaptations Service Improvement Group".

**John** - "I became involved with the Tenants Panel in 1999 after an invitation was extended to join the group at one of the Brandon Residents Group meetings (of which I am member). I've been involved as a tenant ever since then working with the former City of Durham Council prior to the unitary authority".

#### 2. What's the most rewarding part of being involved?

**Kathryn** - "Working with other tenants and the staff of Durham City Homes to help make a difference to service delivery, I also enjoy the Aids and Adaptations Service Improvement Group and having a voice for disabled tenants".

**John** - "As Kathryn has already said working with other tenants and staff, having an input on behalf of tenants throughout the area and seeing some of the changes we have helped shape is what I find the most rewarding".

#### 3. What's your role in the Stock Options process?

**Kathryn** - "I am Chair of the Customer Working Group and a member of the Steering Group".

**John** - "I am a Durham City Homes Tenant Representative on both the Customer Working Group and the Steering Group".

#### 4. Why do you think tenant involvement is important in the Stock Options process?

**Kathryn & John** - "It's very important that all tenants have a say in the Stock Options Appraisal process, the proposals and business plans for the next 30 years affect all Durham City Homes tenants. Whilst the three tenant representatives have an important role to play in ensuring the voice of tenants in Durham is heard, it's important that we engage with all tenants to ensure they understand the process, have the opportunity to express their opinions and are encouraged to be involved via a number of different methods at all stages of the process.

#### 5. How do you think your input has made a difference and is adding value to the Stock Options process?

**Kathryn & John** - "Our input in the process is ensuring that Durham City Homes is kept on the radar, that our tenants are represented and that we the tenants have the opportunity to drive

forward the process along with tenants' opinions being heard and voiced in a formal forum".

#### 6. Do you feel your involvement has benefitted you personally, if so how?

**Kathryn** - "Yes I do, being involved has given me a purpose, I am more confident and my involvement has helped me to see that I have a voice and qualities that can make a difference and help improve services for everyone".

**John** - "I want to reiterate what Kathryn has said as well as adding, during the time I have been involved I have seen many changes and I feel proud to have played my part in representing the tenants of our homes".



#### 7. What would you say to anyone thinking about getting involved in the work of Durham City Homes?

**Kathryn & John** - "Come along, you are important, your input is important, your views and ideas are important and you really can make a difference. It is very rewarding to see the benefits you have helped to achieve. It's not all about meetings, there are many different ways you can become involved. We offer a range of opportunities which are advertised on the Council's website, in the quarterly Tenant Matters newsletter and at the events we hold throughout the year. We can assure anyone interested in becoming involved in what ever way they can, that their input, ideas, views and suggestions are very important and will be listened to. Training and support is given to everyone".

# 5. The TSA's National Standards and Local Offers

In March 2010, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), as our regulator, published a number of National Standards. These standards set out a number of objectives that all social landlords must deliver against to support tenants and leaseholders.

By April 2011, the TSA required all social landlords with more than 1,000 properties to agree a set of Local Offers with their tenants and leaseholders.

The purpose of these offers is not only to improve services for tenants and leaseholders but also to demonstrate how as your landlord we meet the main objectives set down in each of the TSA's National Standards. The local offers provide a way of checking if we are meeting our obligations set down in the TSA national standards.

Our tenants have called their Local Offers - **Local Service Standards**. We published our first Local Service Standards in April 2010, a year ahead of schedule. These standards set out what our customers say is important to them and the level of service they can expect of us.

During the later part of 2010/11, there was a lot of work carried out with tenants to refresh our first Local Service Standards for 2011/12. The refreshed Standards can be found from page 56 of this report.


The TSA national standards include:




- ✓ Customer service, choice and complaints
- ✓ Involvement and empowerment
- ✓ Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants




- ✓ Quality of accommodation
- ✓ Repairs and maintenance




- ✓ Allocations
- ✓ Rents
- ✓ Tenure



- ✓ Neighbourhood management
- ✓ Local area co-operation
- ✓ Anti-Social Behaviour




- ✓ Value for Money




- ✓ As an 'in-house' service provided by the Council, we do not need to meet this standard but we have set out how we would meet it if required.

This report tells you how we performed in delivering these standards.


Throughout this report, you will see we use smiley faces to show our performance against the targets we set ourselves. The faces mean:



Meeting the target



Close to target



Missed target



## Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

### Customer service, choice and complaints

#### The TSA expects us to:

- Provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of our tenants in the delivery of all standards.
- Have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.



#### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- Customers can contact us using our freephone telephone number from 8.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and from 9am to 1pm on Saturdays. Outside these times we operate an emergency service for Repairs and a 24 hour ASB reporting service.
- We have set up direct emails for a number of services and customers can contact us online 24 hours a day.
- We will provide information in a range of formats that are suitable for your needs, including large print, Braille and audio upon request. We make available “visual aid” customer care kits.
- We have a wide range of information leaflets covering the services we deliver. These are also published on our website along with other key documents.
- We have a comprehensive customer complaints process in place which is supported by the County Council.
- We give tenants a choice and say in the services we deliver e.g. tenants can pick their own kitchen as part of the Decent Homes programme and they can choose how they want us to communicate with them.

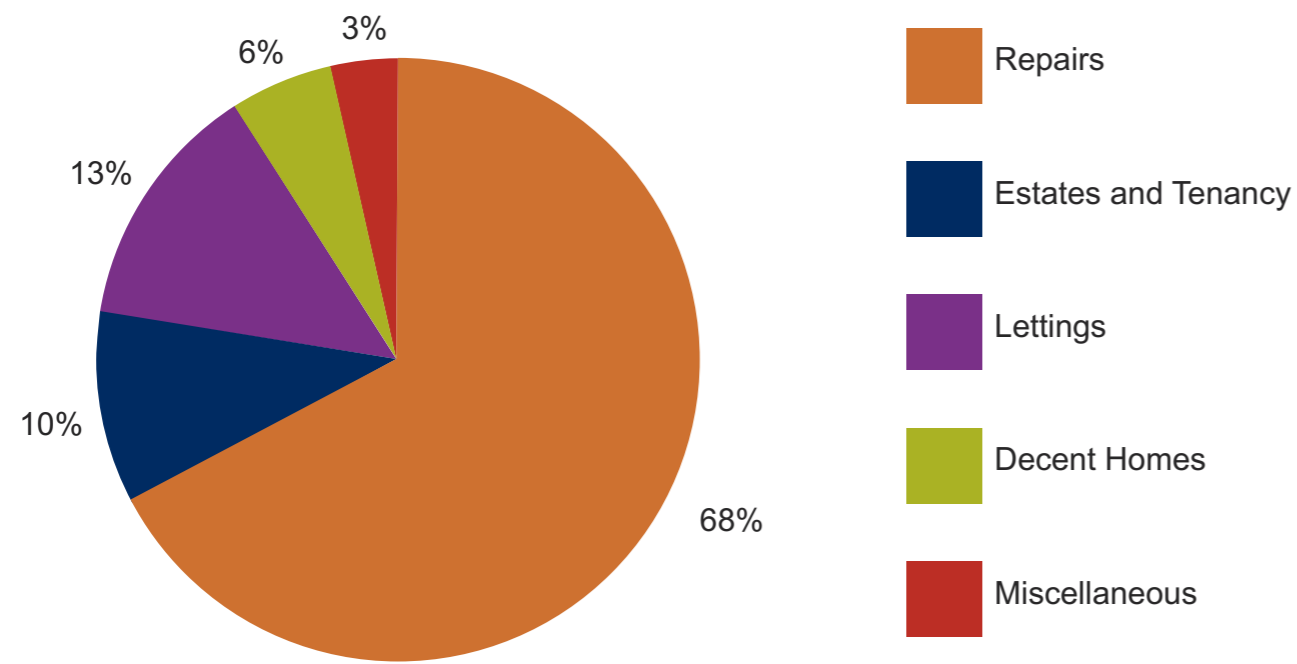




**The types of complaint we received in 2010/11:**

There are a number of stages in the Council's complaints process. Your initial complaint is known as a stage 1 complaint, this type of complaint is responded to by individual services. If you are not happy with this response, you can then proceed to a stage 2 complaint, these are investigated by the Council's Corporate Complaints Team. After this, your next step would be to take your complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

**Stage 1 Complaints 2010/11:**



In 2010/11, we received 67 stage 1 complaints, 68% of these, as shown in the table above related to the repairs service. Three of these complaints went onto Stage 2 of the complaints process. We responded to 78% of stage 1 complaints within 10 days.

**Learning from your feedback:**

When you make a complaint or complete a survey about our services, it is important that we learn from your experience and put things right to make sure problems don't occur in the future. Some of our key learning, from the things you said in 2010/11 included:

**You told us:** *That you felt your repairs took too long* → **What we did:** *We improved our repair response times*

**You told us:** *That there were a number of problems with the boilers we were installing* → **What we did:** *We changed our boiler supplier*

**You told us:** *That there were problems with the phones being answered* → **What we did:** *We talked to Council colleagues and we regularly monitor performance in this area, as a result response times are now improving*

**You told us:** *There was a lack of awareness about our Estate Walkabouts*

**What we did:** *We now publicise these widely in our Tenant Matters newsletter*

**A brief look at how we performed in 2010/11:**

We delivered all 12 Customer Care and Access actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.

We met 1 of the 4 Local Service Standards in this area, 2 were not measured. We successfully responded to over 90% of complaints in under 10 working days. Performance in terms of answering telephone calls within 1 minute is improving, but we do not achieve this all the time.

**Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:**

- We reduced the number of telephone numbers so that customers are clear on how they can contact us, including advertising our free-phone number widely.
- We published a policy allowing tenants to ask us to consider paying compensation if we fail to deliver the agreed level of service to them.

**Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:**

- Review our out-of-hours service with tenants to see if there are any improvements we can make.
- Work with County Council colleagues to improve our response times for answering telephones.
- Review how we handle complaints internally to see if we can speed up the process.

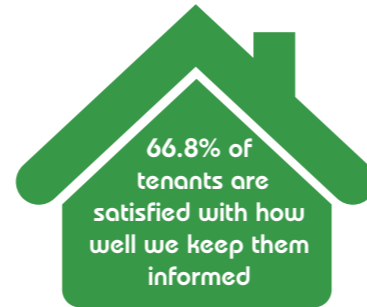
**84% of tenants are satisfied with the helpfulness of our staff**



## Involvement and Empowerment

### The TSA expects us to:

- Offer all tenants a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the management of our housing, including the ability to influence strategic priorities, the formulation of housing related policies and the delivery of housing related services.
- Consult with tenants and act reasonably in providing them with opportunities to agree local offers for service delivery.
- Provide tenants with a range of opportunities to influence how providers meet all the TSA's standards and to scrutinise performance against all standards and in the development of the annual report.
- Provide support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.



### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- Our Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy and Compact clearly set out the different ways people can become involved in the services we deliver.
- Tenants developed and agreed their Local Service Standards (Local Offers) through extensive consultation between January and April 2011.
- Tenants challenge and scrutinise our performance at each of our Service Improvement Groups, Tenants Panel and Board meetings.
- Tenants have driven forward the development of our Reality Checkers programme – enabling tenants to check if we are doing what we said we would.
- We ran a number of training events for tenants and developed a comprehensive training programme as well as providing support for tenants to attend national events and to network locally with other council tenants and housing providers.

### Some of the changes we made in 2010/11 as a result of your feedback:

The changes we made as a result of your feedback are detailed below. These changes cut across each of the TSA national standards:

**You told us:** We were taking too long to complete routine repairs



**What we did:** Reduced the number of days for routine repairs to be completed from 30 to 20 working days

**You told us:** You wanted emergency repairs done the same day



**What we did:** Agreed to complete emergency repairs within 24 hours or the same day if reported before 12 noon

**You told us:** 75 working days was too long to wait for planned repairs



**What we did:** We reduced the time you have to wait for planned repairs to 60 working days

**You told us:** We took too long to complete adaptations



**What we did:** We reduced the number of days to complete major adaptations from 90 to 60 days after your initial assessment



**What we did:** We reduced the number of days to complete minor adaptations from 60 to 30 days after your initial assessment

**You told us:** To give you more notice of Decent Homes work



**What we did:** We extended the number of days verbal notice you are given from 14 to 21 days

**You told us:** 5 days notice was not long enough for meetings



**What we did:** We agreed to give you at least 21 days notice of meetings

**You told us:** To keep you better informed about what was happening with your ASB complaint



**What we did:** We agreed to give you a written action plan telling you what we will do about your complaint within 3 working days of you telling us about it

**You told us:** That you would like to see more articles about what we were doing to tackle ASB in your Tenant Matters newsletter



**What we did:** We now provide a regular update from our Tenancy Enforcement Team and the Police in each edition of Tenant Matters

**You told us:** Our extended hours for repairs was working well



**What we did:** We made the project permanent enabling you to contact us up to 7.30pm (Monday-Friday) and up to 1.00pm on Saturdays to talk to us about repairs

#### Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:

- Through our work with Centrepont, we have started to involve young people in the services we deliver, through surveys, face-to-face sessions and focus groups.
- We held our first Tenants Matter Open Day and other events achieving the Bronze and Silver Awards in the Council's Investors in Communities Scheme.
- We refreshed our website making customer access easier and simpler, including the development of Area Guides – providing new and prospective tenants with more information about our estates and neighbourhoods.
- We started work on developing the role of tenants in scrutinising our services and performance.



We delivered 9 of the 14 involvement actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.



We met 9 of the 11 Local Service Standards in this area and we were close to meeting the others.



We made 15 changes to the way we deliver services as a result of your feedback.



#### Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:

- Launch our Tenant Incentive Points Scheme which rewards you for managing your tenancy well and getting involved with the housing services we deliver.
- Develop area based involvement opportunities to improve the way we address issues in your area.
- Develop tenant scrutiny further with good quality training and support for tenants.



## Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

### The TSA expects us to:

- Understand and respond to the diverse needs of tenants.
- Demonstrate that we understand the different needs of tenants, in relation to the seven equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.




### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- All our staff attend Equality and Diversity awareness raising training.
- We have Customer Care Kits available for tenants and leaseholders that include magnifying glasses and easy-hold pens.
- We have a 24 hour reporting line for Anti-Social Behaviour – including hate crime and domestic abuse.
- We complete Equality Impact Assessments for all our plans, strategies and services.
- We promote and have access to Language Line to ensure all tenants are able to access the same level of service.
- We have developed good working relationships with support agencies including Age Concern, Gay Advice Durham and Darlington (GADD), and Centrepont.


### Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:

- We completed eight Equality Impact Assessments for our main services ensuring they are accessible to all communities.
- We worked with a number of agencies to develop our partnership arrangements to improve how we work together to the benefit of the local community.

### A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:



We delivered 2 of the 6 Diversity actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.



As of 31st March 2011, 69% of tenants had completed our “All about you” survey – giving us valuable information about the make up of our communities.

### Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:

- Roll out our Local Government Equality Standard action plan.
- Develop a tenancy sustainment service, providing help and a signposting service for tenants in need of additional help and support.
- Do further work to use our equality and diversity information to tailor services to meet your needs.
- Develop a programme aimed at increasing the involvement of those communities which agencies often struggle to engage with.

## Tenant Panel Assessment

The Tenant’s Panel have told us what they think we can do better and what their priorities are for the year ahead. We have included these in each section of this report.



**Members of the Tenant’s Panel said that they felt as though we meet the TSA requirements under this standard and they are satisfied with the quality of the services we provide.**

### The Tenant’s Panel said their priorities under this standard include:

- Continuing to improve and expand our involvement mechanisms.

### The Tenant’s Panel think we could do better by:

- Involving more tenants in the groups we have in place.
- Increasing the diversity of involved tenants.
- Increasing the variety of ways to get involved.
- Looking at changing meeting times to meet your needs.
- Letting more people know about what we are doing.



**Your  
'Tenant Involvement  
and Empowerment' 2011/12  
Local Service Standards include:**

- Customer Service & Complaints
- Involvement

Working with you, we developed the above Local Service Standards for 2011/12 as set out at the back of this report.

We will report to our Tenants Panel on how well we are doing on the delivery of these standards. We will also publish performance on our website and provide a summary in your Tenant Matters newsletter.



## Home

### Quality of accommodation

#### The TSA expects us to:

- Ensure that tenants' homes met the Decent Homes standard by December 2010 and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard after this date.
- Meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard.
- In agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards.



#### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- Our Capital Investment Programme ensures that we invest in our homes on a year-by-year basis; achieving the Decent Homes Standard and more. We publish this every year in our Tenant Matters newsletter and on our website.
- We developed the "Durham Standard" for Decent Homes with properties being assessed for new windows and doors which is above the minimum Decent Homes Standard.
- We offer tenants a choice in many of the Decent Homes works which surpasses the minimum standards required.
- Our Local Offer sets out what tenants can expect of us when we carry out works in their home, we make sure tenants know what is being done well ahead of time.

#### Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:

- All properties managed by Durham City Homes met the Decent Homes Standard as at 31st March 2011.
- Our excellent financial management meant we could do more improvement works than originally planned during the year.
- We joined the North East Procurement (NEP) Group ensuring that we get best value for money when purchasing goods and services from others.
- We updated our Adaptations Policy and reduced the number of days qualifying applicants wait for works to be completed from 90 to 60 days.



**A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:**

-  We delivered 16 of the 25 Asset Management and Empty Homes actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.
-  We met all 6 of our Decent Homes Local Service Standards.
-  You scored us 7.5/10 in our Decent Homes (full refurbishment) Satisfaction Survey (our target was 8/10).

**Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:**

- We will explore alternative energy pilots to provide cheaper and more sustainable energy.
- We will review our empty homes re-let procedures and Lettable Standard to see how we can improve our services.
- We will explore opportunities to set up an empty homes garden maintenance programme.
- We will launch our Decent Homes information pack, providing tenants with a range of information about what works we will be carrying out at their home.



  
We installed 303 minor adaptations in 2010/11 costing £40,662

  
75% of tenants are satisfied with the condition of their home

  
To fit new doors and windows to your homes costs us on average £2,470

  
On average a new bathroom costs us £1,770

**Quality of accommodation**

**The TSA expects us to:**

- Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements 'right first time'.
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of tenants in their homes.

  
We installed 84 level access showers and 19 stair lifts in 2010/11

**A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:**

- We use the latest technology to manage our repairs service with tenants being able to report repairs in a variety of ways.
- Repairs can be reported 24 hours a day by telephone and online.
- We offer flexible appointments to suit the needs of tenants including evening and weekend slots.
- Our multi-skilled workforce aim to complete all jobs right first time and where possible they complete all the works without the need for different trades to attend.
- We use North East Procurement (NEP) Group to purchase goods and services maximising cost savings balanced with rigid quality control.
- We have agreed with tenants a minimum 'Lettable Standard' for all empty homes.
- All our operatives are qualified to do the work they are tasked with and are fully up to date with all Health and Safety requirements.

  
82.3% of tenants say repairs and maintenance is the most important service to them

**Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:**

- We have extended our out of hours repairs reporting service; tenants can now report repairs up to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and up to 1.00pm on Saturdays. After this, they can still phone us regarding emergency repairs.
- We have introduced text messaging alerts, so tenants know when we are coming to do their repair.
- We have introduced an annual programme of electrical testing for all our homes on top of our annual gas and solid fuel servicing programme.
- We have refreshed our approach to providing Aids and Adaptations, improving response times.
- Decoration Vouchers for new tenants were introduced and we secured significant discounts for tenants through a local retailer.

  
On average a new kitchen costs us £2,800

  
We completed 175 major adaptations in 2010/11 costing £415,312

  
83% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs service

## A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:



We delivered 9 of the 13 Repair actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.



We met 16 of the 20 Repairs and Gas Servicing Local Service Standards and were close to meeting the remaining 4 Standards.



We met all 5 of our Adaptations Local Service Standards.



You scored us 7.7/10 in our Repairs Satisfaction Survey (our target was 8/10).



You scored us 8.7/10 in our Gas Servicing Survey (our target was 8/10).

## Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:

- Look at introducing a handyman scheme to speed up our response to minor day-to-day repairs.
- Introduce a text service to report repairs.
- Improve fire safety in our communal flat entrances.



## Tenant Panel Assessment



Members of the Tenant's Panel said that they felt as though we meet the TSA requirements under this standard and they are satisfied with the quality of the services we provide.

### The Tenant's Panel said their priorities under this standard include:

- Ensuring homes are modernised to a consistently high standard.
- Working with others to explore the opportunities for building new homes.
- Exploring the potential use of greener energy sources.
- More streamlining of services and standards.

### The Tenant's Panel think we could do better by:

- Aiming higher and improving what we already do.
- Doing more environmental improvements.





## Tenancy

### Allocations, rents and tenure

#### The TSA expects us to:

- Let our homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way.
- Take account of the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants.
- Make the best use of available housing.
- Contribute to the Council's strategic housing function and sustainable communities.
- Have a clear application, decision-making and appeals process.
- Charge rents in accordance with the objectives and framework set out in the Government's Direction to the TSA in November 2009.
- Offer and issue the most secure form of tenure compatible with the purpose of the housing and the sustainability of the community.
- Meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements.



#### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- We are part of the county-wide Durham Key Options (DKO) Scheme, allowing applicants to bid for available housing from a range of providers across the County.
- We have a comprehensive Lettings Policy in place that gives priority to those in greatest need including the homeless, vulnerable and those people in urgent need e.g. those fleeing domestic abuse. Applicants are allocated a Banding depending upon their priority needs.
- For some customers, we offer automated bidding to ensure they don't miss out on available homes.
- All available properties are advertised including those homes we let directly to suitable tenants e.g. properties with medical adaptations.
- We joined 'Homeswapper' - a national scheme to help tenants exchange home with other tenants both in County Durham and in other areas of the country.
- We have in place Local Lettings policies for new build sites, ensuring that those homes are allocated fairly to meet local needs.



- The County Council sets the rent for council owned properties across County Durham, in line with government guidance.
- We offer you a range of ways to pay your rent, including direct debit, online payments, PayPoint and telephone banking.
- All tenants receive a rent statement on a quarterly basis and are notified in writing of annual changes to both rent and service charges.
- All new tenants sign a comprehensive Tenancy Agreement and receive a range of useful information.
- We have a range of support services in place which tenants can access, including a furnished tenancy scheme run in partnership with Your Homes Newcastle.

**Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:**

- We published a new and updated Tenancy Agreement.
- We published our Lettable Standard so that applicants know what they can expect from us when they successfully bid for a home.
- We commissioned an external health check of our Lettings Service and developed a comprehensive action plan to address areas for improvement.
- We converted a number of former Communal Rooms into rented housing.



**A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:**



We delivered 17 of the 31 Lettings, Empty Homes, Leasehold, Income Management and Sheltered Housing actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.



We met 7 of the 10 Lettings Local Service Standards. Two require monitoring systems to be set up.



We met 3 of the 6 Furnished Tenancies Local Service Standards. We are reviewing our approach to furnished tenancies in 2011/12.



You scored us 7/10 in our New Tenancy Satisfaction Survey (our target was 7.5/10).



You scored us 7.6/10 in our Rent Collection and Arrears Satisfaction Survey (our target was 7/10).

**Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:**

- Work with tenants to try and release those properties which are under-occupied by helping people move to smaller homes to meet their needs.
- Publish a comprehensive Tenants Handbook, giving tenants a wide range of information about their tenancy, home and neighbourhood.
- Review some of the services we deliver to tenants and the cost e.g. garden maintenance and furniture scheme.



## Tenant Panel Assessment



Members of the Tenant's Panel said that they felt as though we meet the TSA requirements under this standard and they are satisfied with the quality of the services we provide.

The Tenant's Panel said their priorities under this standard include:

- Ensuring tenancies are sustained with good quality support being given to tenants.
- Making sure tenancy related problems are resolved quickly.

The Tenant's Panel think we could do better by:

- Looking at ways of supporting new and existing tenants.
- Ensuring that homes are well managed by both us and tenants, using tenancy enforcement action when necessary.

### Your 'Tenancy' 2011/12 Local Service Standards include:

- Lettings
- Rent payment
- Furnished tenancies

Working with you, we developed the above Local Service Standards for 2011/12 as set out at the back of this report.

We will report to our Tenants Panel on how well we are doing on the delivery of these standards. We will also publish performance on our website and provide a summary in your Tenant Matters newsletter.





## Neighbourhood and Community

### Neighbourhood management, local area co-operation and anti-social behaviour

#### The TSA expects us to:

- Keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes we own clean and safe.
- Work in partnership with tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective do so.
- Co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in the areas where we own homes.
- Work in partnership with other public agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where we own homes.



#### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- Durham County Council maintains our estates to a good standard including grass cutting, highway maintenance and street lighting repairs.
- With tenants and partners, we carry out regular estate inspections to identify any concerns and put them right.
- We inspect our communal areas on a regular basis to make sure they are clean and safe.
- We participate in a range of multi-agency partnership meetings to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour through effective prevention and enforcement.
- We have published a comprehensive Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) plan and information leaflet for tenants.
- We keep tenants informed of what is happening with their ASB complaint, including agreeing a written action plan with them.
- We offer tenancy support to reduce the number of tenancies that fail.

### Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:

- We introduced a risk assessment framework to ensure that victims of Anti-Social Behaviour get the support they need.
- We set up a 24 hour reporting line for Anti-Social Behaviour.
- We continued to build upon our Estate Walkabout Programme, getting tenants and residents involved in identifying and addressing issues in their local area.
- Introduced area guides for each of our estates.

### A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:

-  We delivered 8 of the 10 Tenancy and Estate Management actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.
-  We met all 13 of our Anti-Social Behaviour Local Service Standards.
-  We met 8 of the 9 Tenancy and Estate Management Local Service Standards.
-  We met all 5 of our Racial Harassment and Hate Crime Local Service Standards.
-  We met all 3 of our Domestic Abuse Local Service Standards.
-  You scored us 5.9/10 in our Estate Management Satisfaction Survey (our target was 7/10).
-  You scored us 7/10 in our Anti-Social Behaviour Satisfaction Survey (our target was 7/10).

### Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:

- Establish a Victim Support Service for people suffering Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Publish a Neighbourhood Policy and set up local neighbourhood groups to increase local involvement.
- Develop a Support Services Directory for tenants and leaseholders.



## Tenant Panel Assessment



Members of the Tenant's Panel said that they felt as though we meet the TSA requirements under this standard and they are satisfied with the quality of the services we provide.

### The Tenant's Panel said their priorities under this standard include:

- Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Creating a nice environment to live in.

### The Tenant's Panel think we could do better by:

- Making sure we deal with any issues you have quickly.
- Establishing local groups to promote community pride and tackle local issues.
- Investing more money in this area.



Your 'Neighbourhood and Community' 2011/12 Local Service Standards include:

- Tenancy and estate management
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Domestic abuse
- Racial harassment and hate crime

Working with you we developed the above Local Service Standards for 2011/12 as set out at the back of this report.

We will report to our Tenants Panel on how well we are doing on the delivery of these standards. We will also publish performance on our website and provide a summary in your Tenant Matters newsletter.



## Value for Money

### The TSA expects us to:

- Have a comprehensive approach to managing our resources to provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services and homes to meet tenants' and potential tenants' needs.
- Prioritise expenditure in relation to each of the standards and in the delivery of our local offers, and in meeting other needs, such as investment in new social housing provision.
- Ensure value for money has been secured and tested.
- Have plans and priorities for delivery of further value for money improvements.
- Have arrangements for tenants to influence the services delivered and the cost of those services that result in service charges to tenants.



### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- Our financial arrangements are managed and agreed as part of the County Council budget setting process.
- Our budget position is reported quarterly to the County-wide Housing Revenue Account Board, as well as to our Tenants Panel and Non-Executive Board.
- Our tenants are asked what their priorities for improvement are as part of our business planning process and resources are allocated accordingly.
- We are part of the North East Procurement (NEP) Group, which enables us to maximise savings to reinvest in services.
- Our annual Delivery Plan sets out what we intend to do to maximise value for money opportunities for the year ahead.
- We are members of 'Housemark' the national housing benchmarking club which enables us to compare our costs to other housing providers.

### Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:

- By joining the North East Procurement (NEP) Group we saved £572,000 from our Decent Homes programme in 2010/11 which allowed us to carry out additional works this year.
- The Council saved £3.25m in corporate and administrative charges as a result of the formation of a single set of recharges for the whole council.
- We converted 4 Communal Halls into homes for people, giving us over £9,000 extra income per year. More Halls are being converted into homes; this will give us more money to spend on your services.
- We saved £161,592 in Supplies and Services costs.
- Volunteers painted a number of our garage blocks, helping us save money.
- By re-letting homes quicker than in 2009/10 we saved over £57,000.
- We completed our first value for money benchmarking exercise through Housemark, which confirmed that we are a low cost provider.

### A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:



We delivered 6 of the 11 Value for Money actions set out in our 2010/11 Service Improvement Plan.

### Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:

- Review existing Service Level Agreements to maximise Value for Money.
- Establish a Value for Money working group.
- Review our furniture scheme to determine if we can deliver a better service for the same money or less.

Achieving value for money is embedded throughout all our Local Service Standards.



### Tenant Panel Assessment



Members of the Tenant's Panel said that they felt as though we were doing okay in this area but that we could do more work to improve Value for Money.

The Tenant's Panel said their priorities under this standard include:

- Making it a priority to involve you more in contract decisions.

The Tenant's Panel think we could do better by:

- Involving you more in the financial decisions we make.
- Involving you more in the management of contracts we award.





## Governance and Financial Viability

This standard only applies to certain providers. As Durham County Council is your landlord, we are not required to meet this standard. However, we have set out how we achieve the requirements of the TSA for your information.

### The TSA expects providers to:

- Ensure that they have in place effective governance arrangements that deliver the aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner.
- Have governance arrangements that:
  - Adhere to all relevant legislation.
  - Comply with their governing documents and all regulatory requirements.
  - Are accountable to tenants, the TSA and relevant stakeholders.
  - Safeguard taxpayers' interests and reputation of the sector.
  - Have an effective risk management framework.
- Manage their resources effectively to ensure their viability is maintained.

### A snapshot of how we meet these expectations:

- Durham County Council has overall responsibility for the delivery of the landlord services provided to tenants and leaseholders across the Durham City area.
- Major decisions that impact on how we do business and manage your home are taken by the Council's Cabinet. If changes are required to the Council's policy framework then these decisions need the agreement of the full Council.
- The Council's Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee holds the Council's Cabinet to account for the decisions it makes. The committee also contributes to the development of policy and services. In September 2010, the committee completed a full review of Durham City Homes and noted the good progress that had been made in improving services for tenants.
- To support the Council's political decision making process, we have established a Durham City Homes Non-Executive Board. Although the Board has no decision making powers, it is able to make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet.
- The Non-Executive Board is made up of equal numbers of tenant representatives, independent members and County Councillors. The Board has clear terms of reference which are reviewed annually.
- The Non-Executive Board is supported by the Tenants Panel and our Service Improvement Groups.

- All tenants are welcome at the monthly meeting of the Tenants Panel. The meeting provides tenants with the opportunity to hold us to account, scrutinise the work we do and help shape the services we deliver.
- The 'Home' Service Improvement Group works towards improving matters relating to repairs, decent homes and other issues impacting upon tenants. We are currently reviewing our Anti-Social Behaviour Group Service Improvement Group, so that it is able to address those local issues which impact upon particular estates or communities.
- We have in place a menu of involvement which supports the work of the above groups, ranging from attending focus groups to simply giving us your feedback. Contact our Involvement Team to find out more.
- The Council's Resources Directorate manage the Housing Revenue Account on behalf of Durham City Homes. Management reports are considered by Cabinet and the Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis.
- Budget meetings are held monthly while quarterly reports are considered by the Tenants Panel and Non-Executive Board. Our budget position is also reported to the County-wide Housing Revenue Account Board, alongside Dale and Valley Homes and East Durham Homes, as managing agents for the Council.
- All risks are managed in accordance with the County Council's Corporate Risk Management Policy.



#### Some of our key achievements in 2010/11:

- We refreshed the Terms of Reference for our Non-Executive Board.
- We started work with the Tenants Panel to enhance their Scrutiny role, to ensure they are able to challenge what we tell them.
- We reviewed the role of our Service Improvement Groups to ensure they continued to drive forward improvements in the work we do.

#### A brief look at how well we did in 2010/11:



We held 6 meetings of our Non-Executive Board.



The Tenants Panel met monthly.



We held a number of meetings with each of our Service Improvement Groups including workshop sessions.



We did not accrue any significant overspend across the budgets we manage.

#### Some of the things we are going to do to improve services in the year ahead:

- Continue to develop the role of the Tenants Panel in scrutinising the work we do.
- Support the Stock Options Appraisal for council housing in County Durham.

#### Tenant Panel Assessment



Members of the Tenant's Panel said that they felt as though we meet the TSA requirements under this standard and they are satisfied with the quality of the services we provide.

#### The Tenant's Panel said their priorities under this standard include:

- Developing their scrutiny role further.

#### The Tenant's Panel think we could do better by:

- Making sure we give you the right support and training to maximise your role in scrutinising the services we deliver.
- Ensuring that you are aware of the roles and responsibilities of the different groups that we have in place.



## 6. A closer look at our performance – facts and figures

Here you can find out, in more detail, about how well we are performing. Where possible we have also compared ourselves to other providers nationally.

Each of the graphs included below show our performance for the services you have told us matter the most to you.

You will see we have referred to different quartiles, these mean:

**Upper quartile** - is the performance position of the top 25% of providers in the country.

**Median** - is the average performance of providers across the country.

**Lower quartile** - is the performance of the bottom 25% of providers in the country.



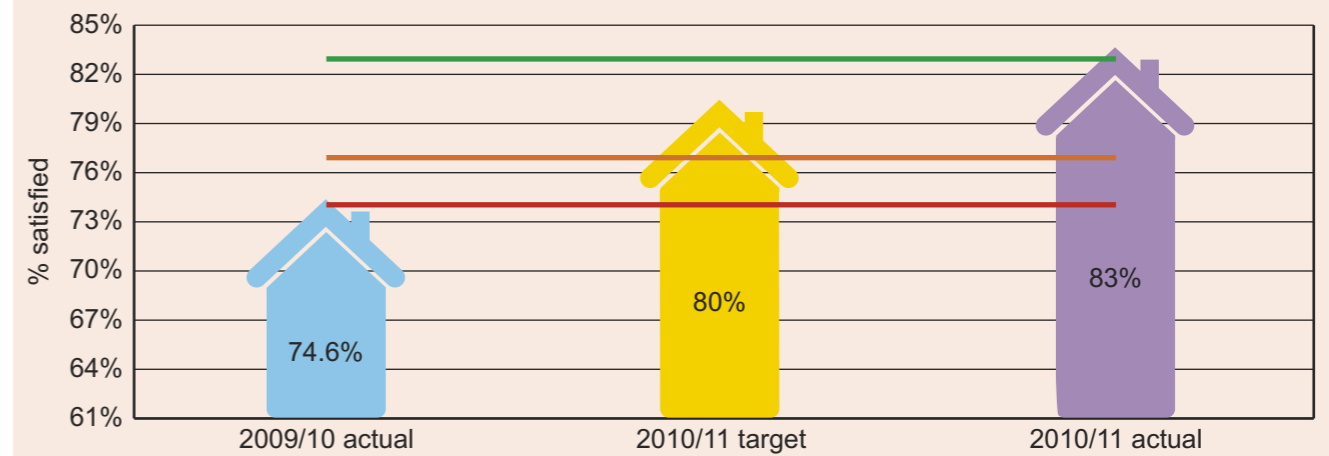
- ✓ We received 67 complaints in 2010/11 – we responded to 77.6% of these in 10 working days.
- ✓ 3 complaints progressed to stage 2 in our complaints process as people were not satisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint.
- ✓ Just over half of our tenants (52.1%) are satisfied with the opportunities for them to get involved with the work of Durham City Homes.
- ✓ 72% of tenants are satisfied with the final outcome of their contact with us compared to 69.7% in 2008.



- ✓ 100% of our homes met the Decent Homes standard as at 31st March 2011.
- ✓ We completed 99.95% of all Decent Homes works within 15 days, our target was 98%.
- ✓ In 2010/11 we fitted 100% of all adaptations within our set timescales, compared to 88.8% in 2009/10.

### Tenant Satisfaction with repairs

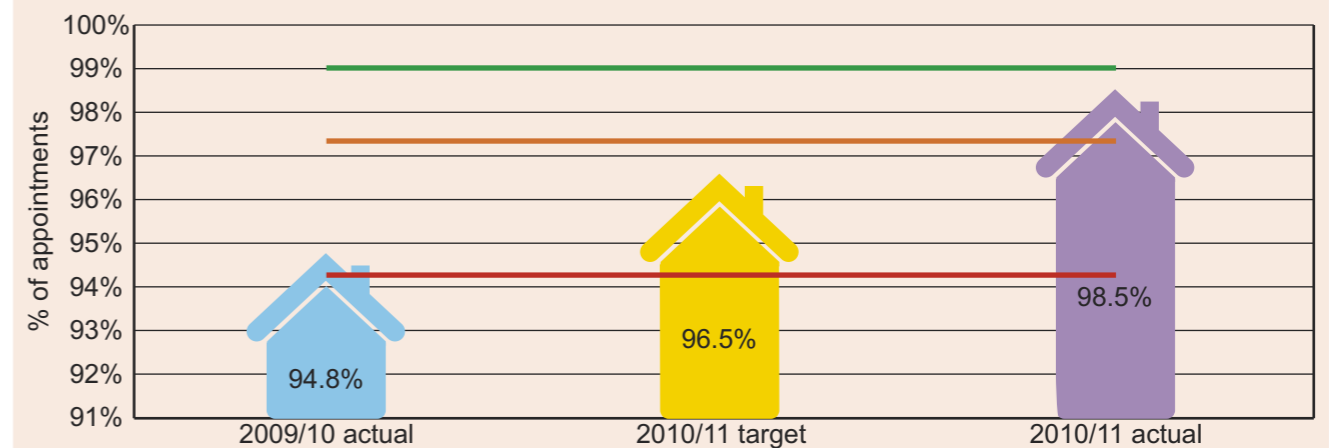
— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Status Survey

### Repairs appointments made and kept

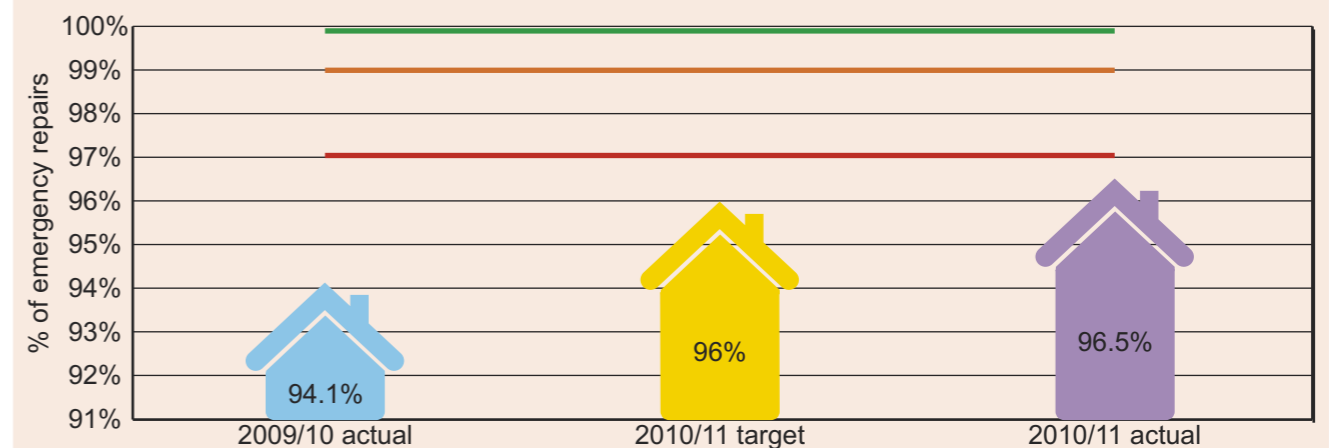
— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Housemark Benchmarking figures 2010/11

### Emergency repairs within timescale

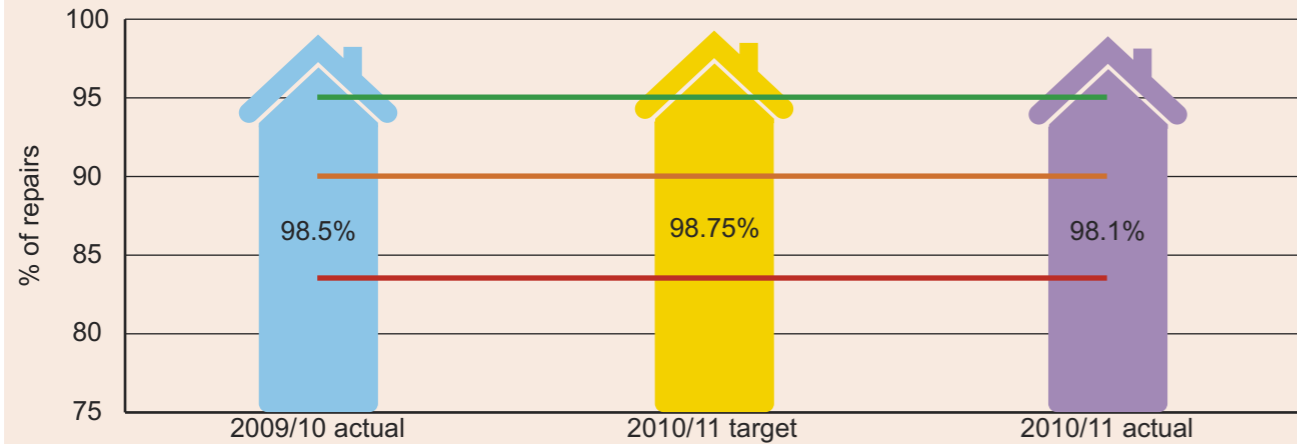
— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Housemark Benchmarking figures 2010/11

**% of repairs completed right first time**

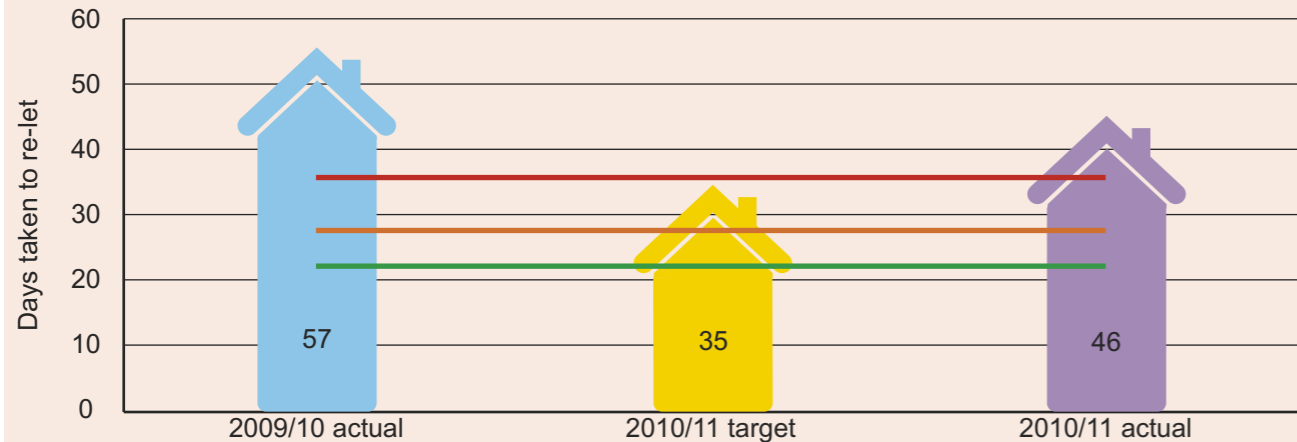
— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Housemark Benchmarking figures 2010/11

**Average time taken to re-let a home (days)**

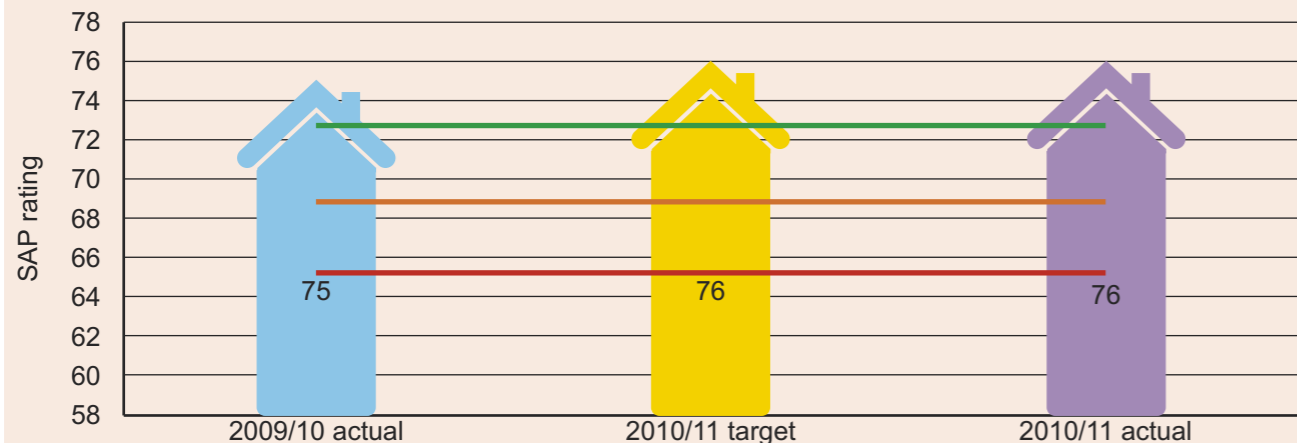
— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Housemark Benchmarking figures 2010/11

**Average energy efficiency of council homes (SAP rating)**

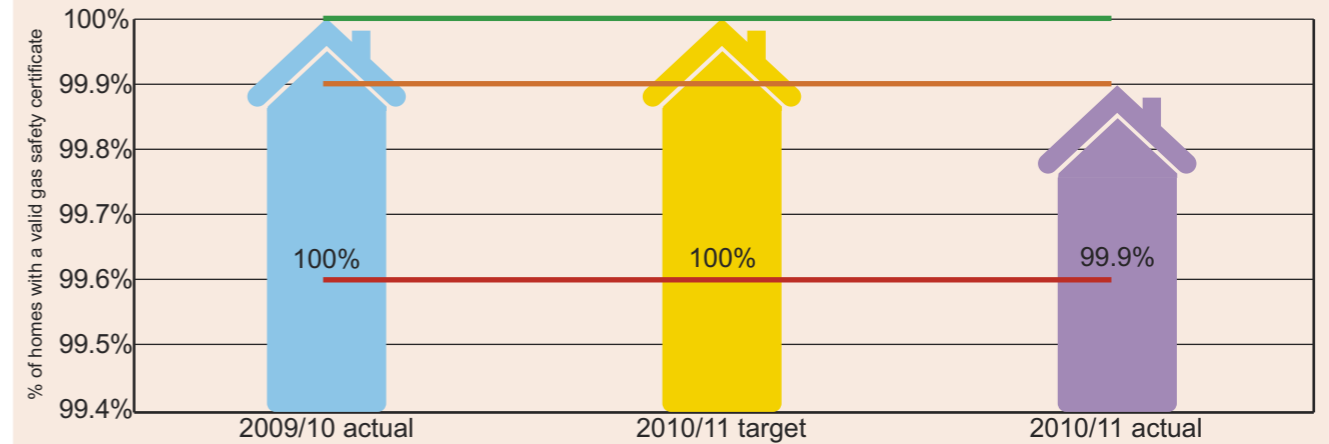
— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Housemark Benchmarking figures 2009/10

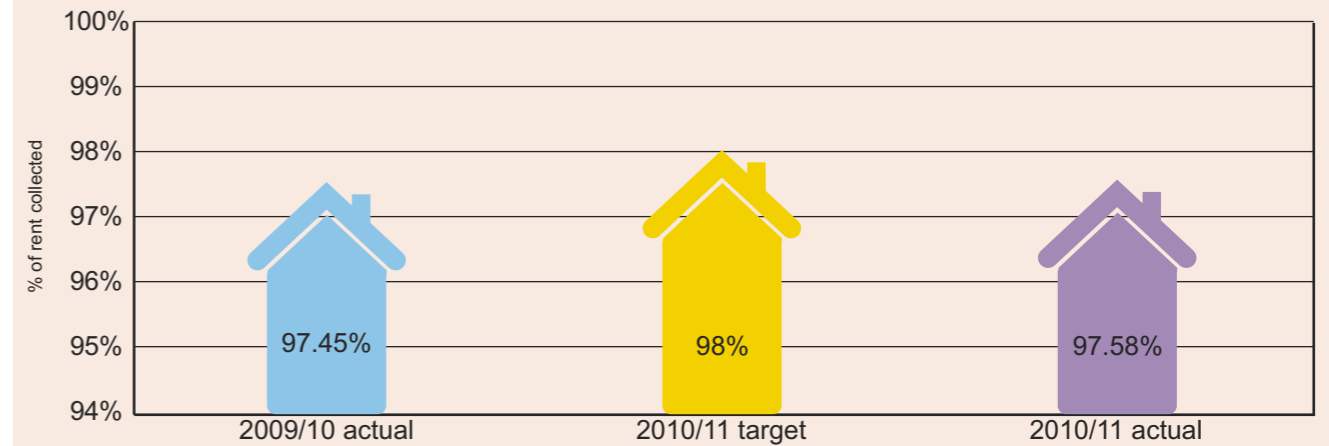
**% of homes with a valid gas safety certificate**

— Upper Quartile — Median — Lower Quartile



SOURCE: Housemark Benchmarking figures 2010/11

**Proportion of Rent Collected (no quartile information available)**



SOURCE: Durham City Homes figures 2010/11



- ✓ The amount of money current tenants owed us fell from £487,864 in 2009/10 to £472,993 in 2010/11, a reduction of £14,871.
- ✓ By reducing the time it took us to let properties in 2010/11 compared to 2009/10, we saved over £53,700 in potential lost rent.
- ✓ In 2010/11, we collected £58,267 former tenant arrears owed to us compared to £47,373 in 2009/10.
- ✓ 995 new applicants registered for rehousing with us in 2010/11.



✓ 87% of tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This figure has remained the same for a number of years:

Tenants satisfaction with their neighbourhood (no quartile information available)



- ✓ The number of planned estate walkabouts with tenants present was 38% against our target of 50%. We will address this through our new approach to neighbourhood groups.
- ✓ Our Tenancy Enforcement Team investigated 149 ASB complaints in 2010/11 compared to 132 in 2009/10.



## 7. How we spent your money

**Council housing in Durham City** is funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This account is managed by the County Council. By law, all the money within the HRA can only be used to deliver council housing services.

Under the National Housing Subsidy System, the council paid all your rent and some other monies, like receipts from the sale of council homes, to the Government. The Government then gave us a set amount of money back to run the housing service in Durham City. In 2010/11, the government kept and redistributed just over £1.8m of your rent to other housing providers as part of the national system.

From April 2012, the National Subsidy System will no longer exist. The Council will be allowed to keep all its housing income, but as part of this process we have to agree a 'debt settlement figure' with the government. This is for the money we have received in the past, we will then need to pay this back from your rent.

### Where the money came from in 2010/11:



**What the money was spent on in 2010/11:**

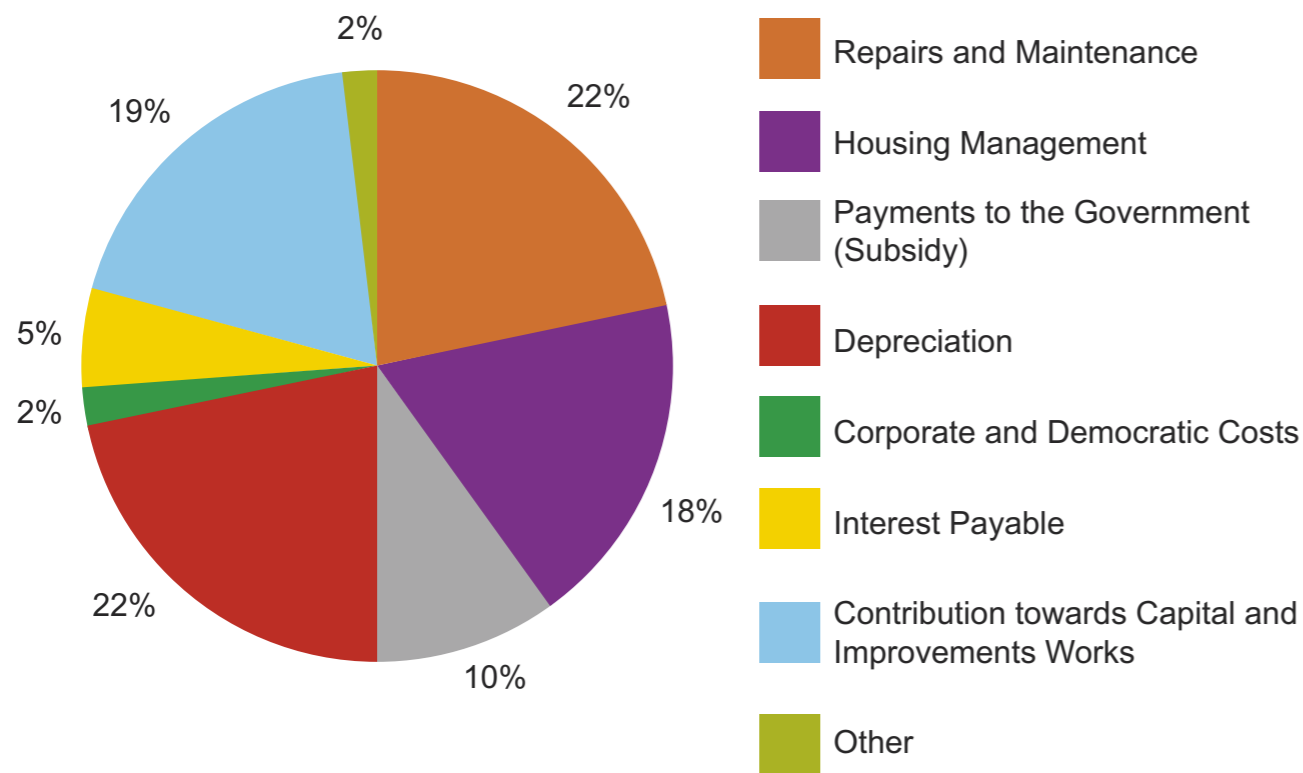


**Capital expenditure in 2010/11:**

Every year we carry out capital improvement works to our homes either through the Decent Homes programme or through our Adaptations Service. The majority of this money came from the government as part of the Major Repairs Allowance and the remainder came from a contribution from the Housing Revenue Account.



The chart below shows how the expenditure was split in percentage terms:



**Some of our priorities for spending in 2011/12:**

Our priorities for spending in 2011/12 include:

- Continuing to fund the Decent Homes programme to the value of £4.13m.
- Ensuring people can live in their homes independently by providing adaptations funding to the value of £0.52m.
- Investing approximately £50,000 in alternative energy pilots.
- To establish an empty homes garden maintenance scheme (£20,000).
- Improving fire safety in our flats (£35,000).
- Investing over £30,000 in a range of projects to improve tenant involvement.

## 8. Further information and how to contact us

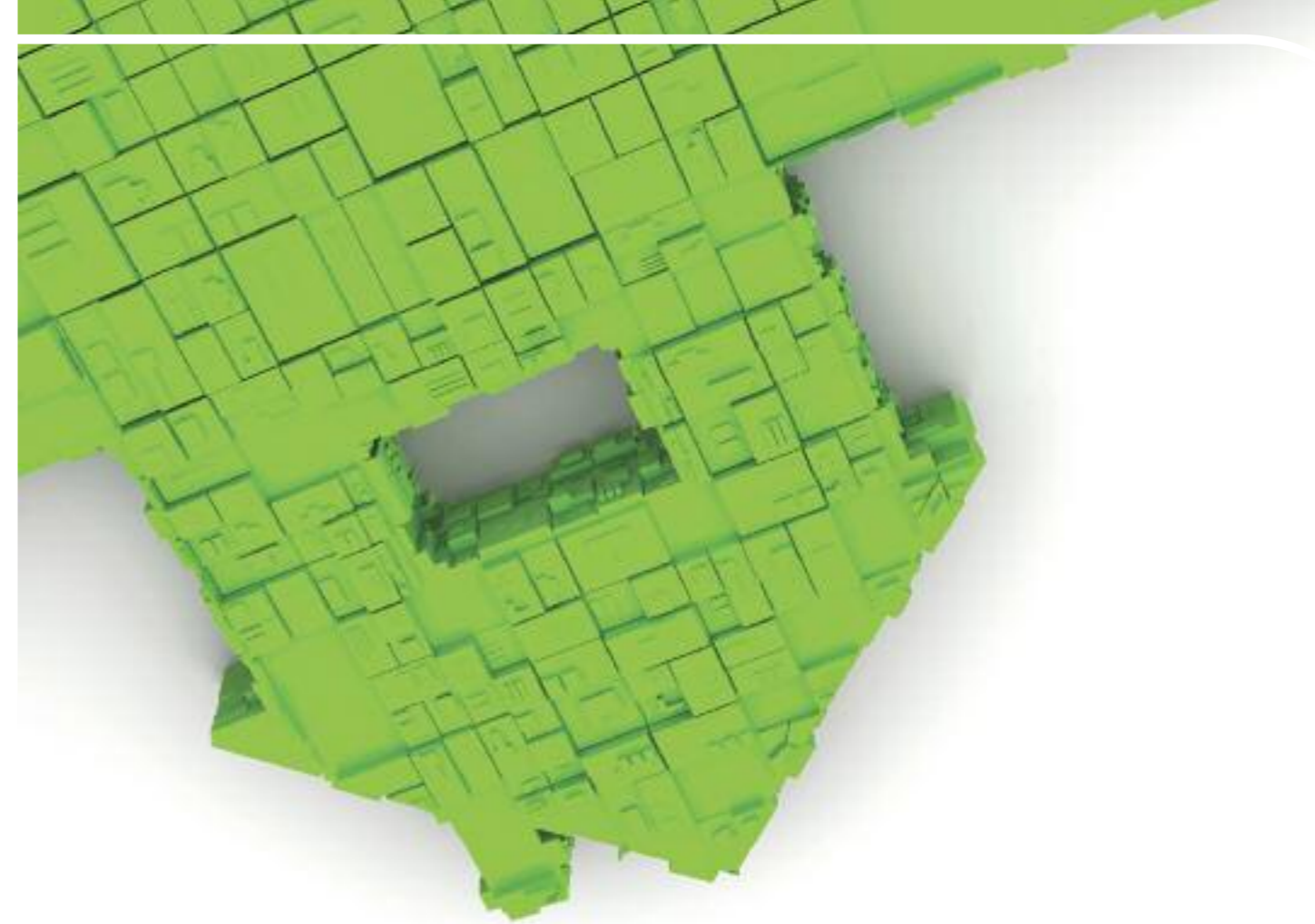
If you have any questions regarding this Annual Report, please do not hesitate to contact us using our contact details below:

- 17 Claypath, **Durham**, DH1 1RH
- Annand House, **Meadowfield**, DH7 8RS

<b>Opening times:</b>	Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5.00pm Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm
<b>Telephone numbers:</b>	<b>0800 068 0013</b> (Calls to an 0800 number are free from a BT landline, charges from other suppliers and from mobiles may vary). <b>0191 301 8470</b> (you will be charged your standard call rate). You can call either of these numbers to talk to us between: 8.30am & 7.30pm Monday to Friday 9.00am & 1.00pm on Saturdays.

Please note that after 7.30pm Monday to Friday and after 1.00pm on Saturdays these numbers should only be used to report an emergency repair or to log your anti-social behaviour complaint.

<b>Automated payments:</b>	<b>0845 835 0120</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<b>durhamcityhomesadmin@durham.gov.uk</b>



## 9. Your Local Service Standards 2011/12

The following table shows your 2011/12 Local Service Standards, where possible we have included how well we performed against these standards last year.



😊 We met this standard in full

😐 We just missed meeting this standard

☹️ We did not meet this standard

TSA Standard: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard		Performance 2010/11
<b>TSA Theme: Customer Service, Choice and Complaints</b>		
<b>Your Customer Service Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Answer 100% of telephone calls within 60 seconds		☹️
● Respond to 90% of all complaints within 10 days		😐
● See customers within 15 minutes if you do not have an appointment		Not measured
● Respond to letters, e-mails or internet enquiries within 10 working days		😊
<b>TSA Theme: Understanding and responding to the needs of tenants – the elements of this strand are considered and included across all our offers</b>		
<b>TSA Theme: Involvement and Empowerment</b>		
<b>Your Involvement Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Give you at least 20 working days' notice of meetings of the Tenants Panel and Service Improvement Groups		New for 2011/12
● Give attendees the agenda and other papers for meetings of the Tenants Panel and Service Improvement Groups, at least 5 working days before the meeting		😊
● Publish 3 copies of Tenants Matters every year		😊
● Carry out at least 4 Reality Checking exercises every year with tenants		☹️
● Hold at least 10 meetings of the Tenants Panel each year		😊
● Hold at least 35 estate walkabouts a year		😊
<b>TSA Standard: Home</b>		
<b>TSA Theme: Quality of Accommodation</b>		
<b>Your Decent Homes Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Publish the programme of Decent Homes work every year		😊
● Write to you 3 months before any works are due to start		😊
● Visit every home to undertake a full survey of work required and talk to you about the choices available		😊

● Give you at least 14 days notice verbally before works start on your home, followed by a copy of the works programme		New for 2011/12
● Give you the contact details of the site supervisor 2 weeks before the work starts		😊
● After the works have been completed we will check 100% of all completed improvements to make sure they have been completed to a good standard		😊
<b>TSA Theme: Repairs and Maintenance</b>		
<b>Your Repairs Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Complete emergency repairs within 24 hours, if a repair is reported before 12 noon (Monday-Friday) it will be completed the same day		New for 2011/12
● Arrange an appointment within 7 working days if we can't identify the repair over the phone		😐
● Respond to a gas leak or a CO alarm activation within 2 hours		😊
● Complete urgent repairs within 7 working days		😐
● Complete routine repairs within 20 working days		New for 2011/12
<b>Your Gas and Solid Fuel Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Complete a safety check when you move into your home		😊
● Service your heating appliance every 12 months		😊
● Send you a letter with an appointment for our engineers to call when it is time for your gas service. If you can't make this appointment, please contact us		😊
● Give you a copy of the safety certificate, when the service is completed		😊
● Check any smoke and carbon monoxide alarms we have fitted, at the same time as your annual gas or solid fuel service		😊
● Check 10% of all gas safety inspections to make sure they have been completed to a good standard		😊
<b>Your Adaptations Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Assess all requests for support within 30 days of the request being received by us		New for 2011/12
● Give you 7 calendar days verbal notice followed by written notification before starting any minor works on your property		😊
● Complete all minor adaptations within 30 working days of the initial assessment		New for 2011/12
● Give you 7 calendar days written notice before starting major adaptations work on your home		😊
● Complete all major adaptations within 60 working days of the initial assessment		New for 2011/12
● Check 100% of all major adaptations and 10% of all minor adaptations to make sure they are completed to a good standard		😊

TSA Standard: Tenancy		Performance 2010/11
<b>TSA Theme: Allocations, Rent and Tenure</b>		
<b>Your Lettings Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Assess your housing application within 10 working days from when you give us all the information needed		Not measured
● Let you know the result of your appeal against our banding decision within 10 working days from the day you give us all the evidence to support your appeal		Not measured
● Advertise our available homes each week (except at Christmas and New Year)		😊
● Make an offer over the phone within one day of the close of bidding		😊
● Allow you one working day after offering you a home to decide whether to accept it or not		😊
● Contact everyone registered on DKO at least once a year to check they still need a home		😞
<b>Your Rent Payment Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Send you a rent statement every 3 months		😊
● Give you at least 28 calendar days' notice of any rent or service charge changes		😊
<b>If you owe money, for example, if your rent account is in arrears, we will:</b>		
● Respond to any enquiry from you within 5 working days		😊
● Send you a reminder, if appropriate, within 14 calendar days if you miss a payment, telling you the amount due, how you can pay it and what will happen if you don't repay the debt		😊
● Confirm any payment arrangement we make with you to clear any arrears in writing within 3 working days		😊
<b>Your Furnished Tenancy Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Have furniture delivered on a convenient day within 5 working days of you asking for it		😞
● Replace any furniture that needs changing due to wear and tear within 5 working days of you telling us about it repair or replace any faulty cooker we have supplied to you within 2 working days		😊
● Collect furniture within 5 working days of you asking us to		😞
● Make an inventory of the furniture in your package every 6 months. This means we list the furniture and its condition		😊

TSA Standard: Neighbourhood and Community		Performance 2010/11
<b>TSA Theme: Neighbourhood Management</b>		
<b>Your Tenancy and Estate Management Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Visit you within 4 weeks of you moving into one of our properties		😊
● Visit all new tenants again before the first anniversary of moving into their new home		😊
● Publicise and carry out a programme of estate walkabouts		😊
● Publish outcomes of estate walkabouts twice a year		😞
● Remove racist or other "hate" graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported		😊
● Refer any complaint to the agency responsible for dealing with it within two working days		😊
● Secure abandoned or insecure properties within 24 hours of being told about them		😊
● Remove syringes from our estates within 24 hours of being told about them		😊
● Offer you an appointment to table about other concerns you may have within 5 working days of you asking		😊
<b>TSA Theme: Anti-social behaviour (ASB)</b>		
<b>Your ASB Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Contact you and begin investigating your complaint within 24 hours for high priorities within 3 working days for routine cases		😊
● Where we cannot resolve your concerns at the first point of contact, we will provide you with a written action plan within 3 working days		New measure for 2011/12
<b>Your Racial Harassment and Hate Crime Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Speak to you within 24 hours of you telling us, so we can gather more information to help us investigate it properly		😊
● Remove offensive or racist graffiti from our buildings within 24 hours of it being reported to us		😊
● Agree an action plan with you within 24 hours and keep you informed of progress until your case is closed		New measure for 2011/12
<b>Your Domestic Abuse Local Service Standards:</b>		
● Speak to you about your complaint within 24 hours of you telling us, so we can gather more information to help us investigate it properly		😊
● Agree an action plan with you within 24 hours and keep you informed of progress made until your case is closed		😊

Note:

- Your Local Service Standards above are for 2011/12. Where possible we have shown how well we did against these in 2010/11. We have included the new standards which you asked for in the table above. However, we have not included the ones you asked us to delete from the 2010/11 offers. We have however, told you how many of the 2010/11 Local Service Standards we met in the main part of this report.
- Where we have stated 'not measured' we intend to set up monitoring systems for these.