

# Annual Report

2023 - 2024



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# Welcome

The annual report shows our performance from April 2023 to March 2024. You can read about the work we have done that aims to positively impact our customers and communities across the city and find out more about our plans and how you can get involved.

Over the last 12 months, Wolverhampton Homes (WH) has continued to support the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) in delivering its priorities by providing good-quality services for our customers and communities. The annual report provides an opportunity to reflect on the last year and to consider our future plans and priorities.

There have been significant changes in the social housing landscape, with increased regulation and governance. The new Consumer Standards set out the Housing Regulator's expectations for the customer voice to be heard. It has never been more important for us to be transparent around our day-to-day operations and to ensure our customers benefit from all we can provide.

We remain steadfast in our mission to help people get on in life, and we aim to do this through living our values every day.

## Our mission:



## Our vision:



## Our company values:



### Working **together**

*because we achieve more that way*



### Open to **new ideas**

*by trying new things*



### Respecting **differences**

*by being fair and respectful*



### Delivering **our promises**

*because customer service matters*



## Councillor Rita Potter **Acting Chair of Board**



**I have been a board member since 2012 and a councillor for Wednesfield North Ward for 14 years. I value the opportunity, acting chair of the board, to represent the interests of our customers and stakeholders.**

During my term, my focus is to ensure that we continue to place customers at the heart of everything we do, and that we listen and respond.

The recent changes to regulation and the impact of the economy for customers and businesses have meant that we must consider how best we deliver our services, ensuring value for money. The board has a vital role in ensuring we uphold the consumer Standards and respond to the changing landscape of social housing and the economic challenges.

The introduction of the Customer Involvement Panel has shown how important it is to listen to and involve our customers in shaping our services, policies and strategies. The panel has made a significant contribution to the Good Neighbour Charter and other initiatives that enhance the quality of life for our tenants and leaseholders. I will continue to ensure that the customer voice is heard and respected at the board level and throughout the organisation.

## **Louise Talbot** **Chair of the Customer Involvement Panel**



**My name is Louise Talbot and I am chair of the Customer Involvement Panel. As a tenant and customer of Wolverhampton Homes, my role involves overseeing the panel meetings that take place each month.**

The panel has provided opportunity to meet with and listen to fellow customers and to understand how WH operates. I like that as a panel, we are given the insight and opportunity to contribute on behalf of the tenants and leaseholders on many matters. It means we are increasingly shaping the service and delivery that WH provides across the city and to its customers.

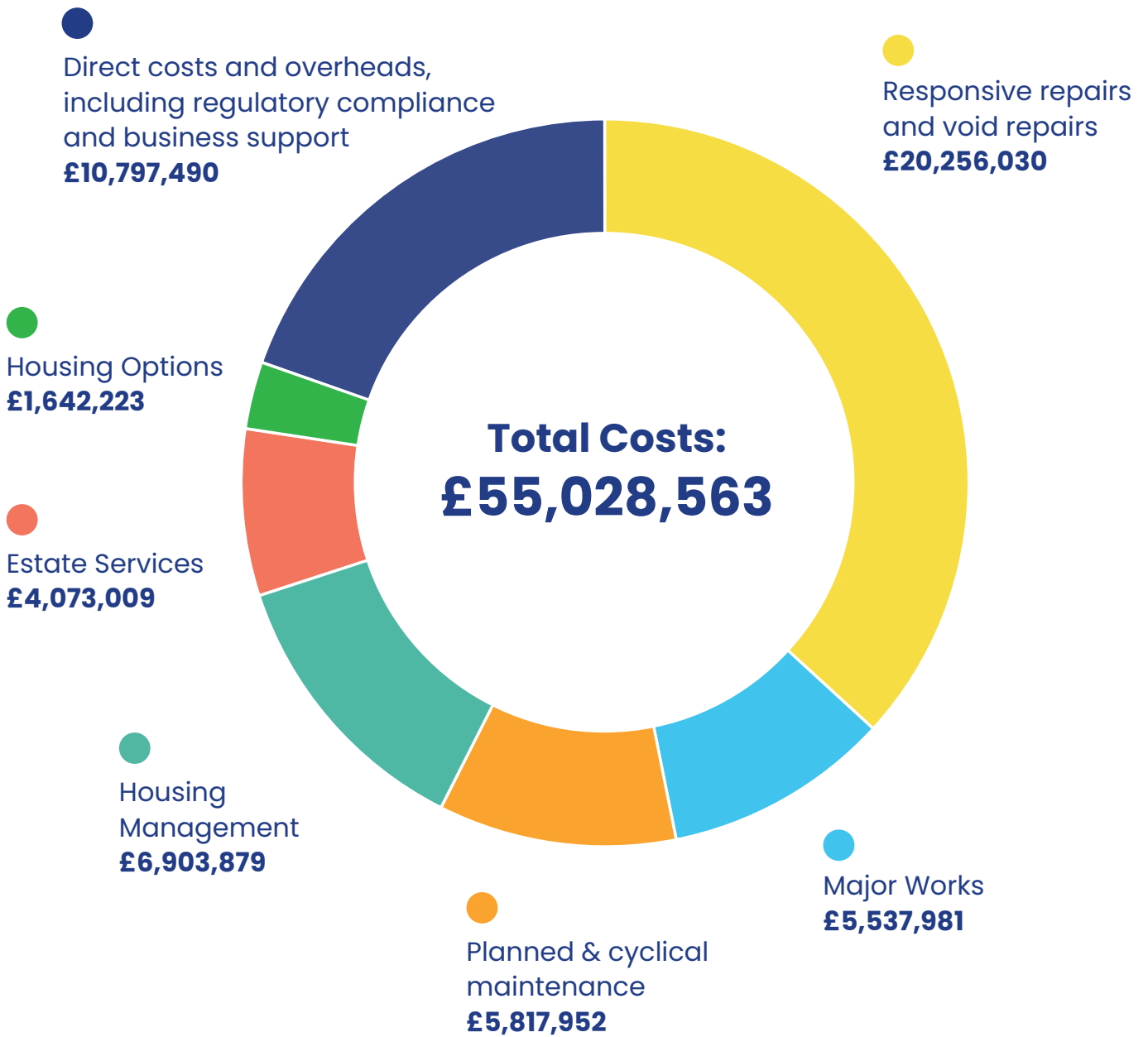
It's fantastic that WH seeks our advice and takes on board our thoughts, challenges and recommendations. The engagement we have is excellent and it feels good to have our customer voice acknowledged and heard. This

collaboration is truly benefitting WH customers city-wide. I would encourage customers to become involved. If you would like to find out more information, please contact: [WHSbusinessassurance@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk](mailto:WHSbusinessassurance@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk)

# Customer



## Our Finances





## Your rent

Your rent helps to pay for the delivery of our services and to support the maintenance of your home.

**£95,613,916**

in rent was collected on behalf of the City of Wolverhampton Council.

**99.4%**

of rent was collected this year.



## Customer Contact and Access

Our face-to-face Customer Contact and Access service provides the opportunity for you to speak to us in person. Our customer contact centre handled approximately 200,000 contacts this year, through calls, emails and digital channels. We know how important customer service is in managing your home, so we continue to make improvements to help us deliver the high-quality service you expect.

### You said:

**“We sometimes wait a long time on the phone when contacting you.”**

### We did:

Since April 2023, we have improved our call waiting times by 47%. We continue to monitor this to ensure we are providing an efficient service for our customers.

### You said:

**“We would like to speak to you face to face.”**

### We did:

Our face-to-face Customer Contact and Access service provides you with the opportunity to speak to us in person. Between September 2023 and March 2024, 5,275 customers have benefitted from this service.

We continue to focus on enhancing the services you have told us are most important to you.

The average call waiting time to our emergency repairs and homelessness lines is 1 minute 22 seconds. **This is a reduction of 89% from the previous year when the average wait time was 15 minutes 10 seconds.**

**165,375**

calls received by our customer contact centre

**24,590**

digital contacts responded to

**5,275**

face-to-face contacts

**7 minutes  
40 seconds**

average call waiting time



## Knowing our customers

To continue to meet your needs and expectations, we are working to better understand how you want to receive the services we deliver. It is more important than ever that we offer good-quality housing services.

The City of Wolverhampton has a diverse population of more than 260,000 residents. According to the 2021 census, about 45% of residents are from an ethnic minority group and just below one-fifth of the population is classed as disabled. There are about 109,000 households in the city across 20 wards.

We are working to better understand what motivates and challenges you, using your feedback and input to deliver a more person-centred approach.



**260,000**  
residents



**45%**  
are from an ethnic  
minority group



**Just below  
one fifth**  
are classed as  
disabled



## Money Smart

We are committed to supporting you with the cost-of-living challenges.



**6,600**  
customers helped  
with financial support



**530**  
food bank  
referrals



**£310,000**  
additional support  
funds accessed for  
customers through  
Money Smart

For more information, or to access support, please visit the [Money Advice](#) page on our website.



## Home Energy

Our Home Energy team supports a range of Wolverhampton Homes and City of Wolverhampton Council activities and events to help you understand your energy consumption and to advise what you could do to save energy and money.

**Over the year, the Home Energy team work has included:**

155

Customer energy enquiries

125

Home energy visits

83

Properties fitted with draught-proofing insulation

14

Drop-in and energy advice surgeries

52

Referrals to the Money Smart team

61

Customer referrals to Severn Trent Water



## Customer Resolution

We take all complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve our services or to change our policies. By monitoring themes of complaints, we can also identify any training needs or process reviews.

95%

customer complaints responded to in time.

264

complaints received at Stage 1.

58

complaints received at Stage 2.

**When things go wrong, we work with you to put things right, and where we need to, we introduce new ways of working to ensure it doesn't happen again.**

When we investigate a complaint, we aim to:

- Resolve a complaint at the first point of contact.
- Identify any customer support needs at the first point of contact.
- Establish if customers need additional support.
- Signpost to additional services, such as Strengthening Families or Adult Social Care.
- Keep customers informed regularly about their complaint.

We are committed to listening to and resolving your issues. Wolverhampton Homes are required to complete an annual self assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code which you can find [here](#).

### How to make a complaint:

You can find out how to make a complaint on our [website](#).





## Repairs, maintenance and lettings

### Repairs and maintenance

We know how important the maintenance of your home is. We continue to invest in our repairs teams to deliver a high quality and timely service for you.

**This year, we have spent £20 million on repairs.**

<b>63,189</b>	response repairs completed.
<b>98.79%</b>	response repairs completed on time.
<b>8,328</b>	repairs reported online.



## Compliance

### Gas, Electrical, Lifts, Asbestos, Water, Fire, Damp, Mould and Condensation

**99.9%** 

Properties with a valid gas safety record

**99.8%** 

Electrical installation condition reports within five years

**100%** 

Asbestos containing materials re-inspected within timescales

**100%** 

Legionella bacteria risk assessments carried out within timescale

**77.9%** 

Damp, mould and condensation service requests inspected within target timescale

**67.7%** 

Damp, mould and condensation work completed within target timescale

**100%** 

Fire risk assessments completed within agreed timescales

**100%** 

Passenger lifts serviced within timescale

**Our team of Healthy Homes Advisors is committed to supporting you to live comfortably at home.**

The team is available for home visits to assess your property and to provide support and advice, making sure that any damp, mould and condensation issues are rectified quickly.

We developed a predictive analysis model that enables us to use data to better understand how damp, mould and condensation can be addressed proactively.



## Lettings

## Finding a new home

**96.45%**

of new tenants are satisfied with the lettings process.

**1,028**

properties were allocated, and another 160 home exchanges took place.

**6,638**

people on the housing register.

**22**

days on average for a home to be re-let after repairs.



## My Account app

Our My Account app, available on mobile phone, tablet or PC, makes everyday housing-related tasks quick and simple. Through the app, customers can:

- Manage repairs bookings and cancellations.
- Contact us directly via the built-in messaging tools.
- Manage weekly bids or view outcomes of previously available properties.
- Have more control over their data.
- Shape and improve future versions of the app through feedback.

**12,912**

accounts registered by March 2024.

**21,748**

accounts registered to date (September 2024).

**114,136**

individual bids placed.

**3,386**

self-service repairs created by customers.

**379**

properties advertised.





## Corporate Social Responsibility

### Giving Something Back

As Wolverhampton's biggest social housing provider, we are more than just bricks and mortar. We recognise that helping to create thriving communities is a huge part of our role.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is about how we give something back to our communities, how we play our part in tackling the challenges some of our communities face and working with our partners, contractors and supply chain to help create positive sustainable change.

We also encourage all WH team members to support the local community through paid volunteering days. Our CSR programme aims to promote sustainable practices, such as maintaining green spaces.

A key part of our CSR and Community Investment strategy is supporting community groups and voluntary organisations. Local groups create safe and welcoming spaces for people to meet their neighbours and develop connections, which can reduce loneliness and social isolation. They play an important role in building relationships with customers and partners.



## Customer Involvement Panel

Hearing the customer voice is key to all we do, which is why we introduced the Customer Involvement Panel (CIP). CIP works with us to review our strategies, policies and other changes to services or standards that could impact you.

The panel also scrutinises our performance and progress when it comes to achieving targets within any strategy or service we provide. This is a transparent process and ensures customers engage in any decision making.



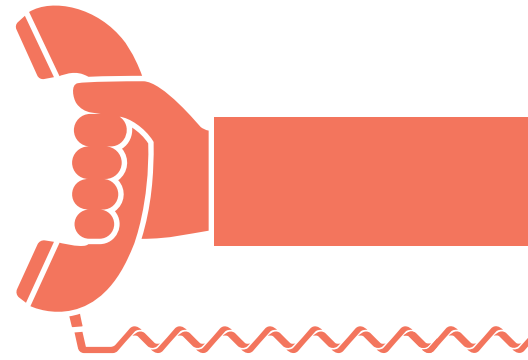


## Additional Support

### Befriending Service

This service is run by tenant volunteers, who are specially trained and available to call residents.

- 82 tenants called weekly
- More than 4000 calls made
- Tackling loneliness and isolation
- Making sure tenants are safe and well



### Friendship Groups

Tenant volunteers support these groups across the city, with input from WH team when needed.

- Five active meetings across the city each week
- Providing warm spaces, these groups support loneliness and isolation, promote wellbeing and bring communities together
- Activities include coffee mornings, knitting, darts, gardening, arts and crafts



### Tenant and resident associations (TARAs)

With a community focus, TARAs host a range of activities and meetings.

- Six across the city
- Community agenda focusing on what is important to them
- Linking with our partners



# Colleagues



## WH Team

With nearly 700 employees, we are one of the city of Wolverhampton's biggest employers and we take our responsibility to the city seriously.

We support the City of Wolverhampton Council in delivering city-wide objectives, such as our early careers programmes. These provide young people with opportunities to gain valuable skills and experience in the social housing sector, combined with formal learning and qualifications that will help them to attain a long and rewarding career.

We remain committed to developing talent and want to attract and retain the best people through an inclusive and diverse company culture, excellent training and development opportunities, and a first-class employee experience.







## REACH

We launched our REACH programme in 2023 to support the council's priority of reducing youth unemployment.

REACH is a free, six-week work experience programme for jobseekers aged 18-24 living in Wolverhampton. Participants take part in hands-on work experience and benefit from one-to-one employment support, helping them to develop a range of skills that employers value.



**125**  
applications

**102**  
invited for  
interview

**4 REACH** cohorts

**32**  
attended  
interview

**30**  
offers  
made



**23 completed the REACH programme**

Several of the young people who completed our REACH programme have gone on to complete apprenticeships with us, and one has gained full employment.



## Apprentice and management trainee programme

We appointed ten apprentices. Four of these are in office-based roles and six are trade operatives working in property maintenance, bricklaying and roofing. At Wolverhampton Homes, we now have 23 apprentices across our teams. A further three apprentices will start at Wolverhampton Homes in September 2024.

We also have five management trainees from the 2022 cohort, all of whom have attained their HNC qualifications. Three will progress to a bachelor's degree from September 2024. We have appointed a further three management trainees, who will start in September 2024.





## Colleague learning opportunities

We realise how important it is for our colleagues to have access to training and we provide a range of learning opportunities to increase their professional development.

This is done through in-person and online training, accredited courses and self-managed elearning, which is available through our My Learning Hub virtual platform.

We actively encourage managers in the business to attain Member or Fellow qualifications from the Institute of Leadership and Management.



## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

We believe that everyone should have fair and equal access to services and opportunities. We are passionate about EDI and it is at the heart of everything we do.

We pride ourselves on our inclusive working environment and we have a negative gender pay gap. This means the midpoint hourly rate of pay of female employees is slightly higher than the pay of male employees.

The ethnicity profile of our workforce is broadly in line with that of the city of Wolverhampton and about 70% of our employees live within the city.

	Criteria	WH	City
Age	Under 25	6%	31%
	25-49	45%	33%
	50-64	45%	18%
	65+	4%	16%
Gender	Female	37%	50%
	Male	61%	48%
	Other	2%	2%
Ethnicity	Asian	13%	21%
	Black	9%	9%
	Mixed ethnic	5%	5%
	White	73%	60%
	Other	0%	5%



We support a range of EDI activities, with every colleague undertaking mandatory EDI learning each year. We also undertake research to ensure our services are inclusive.

We are proud sponsors of Wolverhampton Pride.





## Awards



We were proud to have received a second consecutive gold award in the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Occupational H&S Achievement Awards.

We submitted more than 100 pieces of evidence to demonstrate that we perform to the highest standards when it comes to health and safety.

Our commitment to health and safety includes comprehensive training for all colleagues and an improved alert system.



*“Receiving the RoSPA gold award for the second year running recognises the outstanding occupational health and safety management systems and culture that help keep our colleagues and customers safe. It is testament to the hard work of our committed colleagues across Wolverhampton Homes.”*

Michael Hough, Customer Experience Manager

Wolverhampton Homes was shortlisted for five awards in the Housing Heroes and Women in Housing awards.

In the Housing Heroes awards, we were Highly Commended in the Best Employer category in 2023 for our work on employee journey and employee experience and satisfaction.



## Apprenticeship award winner!

One of our apprentices, Ravel Wallace, won the 2023 Apprentice of the Year for the property and construction industries, at the Ladder for the Black Country Apprenticeship Awards. A plumbing and gas apprentice, Ravel impressed judges with his expertise, positive attitude and commitment to making customers' homes safer and warmer.

*“Apprenticeships are an excellent route to a secure and fulfilling career. Ravel has shown dedication and tenacity, right from the initial recruitment day, and we’re so pleased to see this award received in recognition of his hard work and determination to succeed.*

*Ravel’s mentor, Mark, joined Wolverhampton Homes as an apprentice himself so he’s been a fantastic role model, and is able to demonstrate to young recruits the career progression that’s available if you work hard and excel in your role.”*

Julie Haydon, Director of Corporate Services



**WINNER**  
**Ravel Wallace -**  
**2023 Apprentice**  
**of the Year!**



# Standards and regulation



Through the landmark Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing now have greater powers to enforce higher standards on behalf of customers. We are constantly working to ensure we meet the regulation and standards, through regular self-assessment.

This work is also supported by the City of Wolverhampton Council, and colleagues work closely to understand what is working well and what could be better. The Consumer Standards were revised and launched in April 2024 and following consultation, the Regulator of Social Housing launched the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These apply to all housing providers and landlords, and are measured throughout the year and published annually. Our results for 2023–2024 are published on our [website](#).

We will continue to inform you and will create opportunities so you can learn more and help us to drive improvements, where necessary.





# Consumer Standards

There are currently four Consumer Standards, with further potential in 2025 for an additional standard, Conduct and Competence.

Here is a brief explanation of the four current standards:

**1 The Safety and Quality Standard.**  
We must provide safe and good-quality homes, as well as good-quality landlord services.

**2 The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.**  
We must be open with you and treat you with fairness and respect. You should be able to have easy access to services; raise concerns when necessary; influence decision-making; and hold your landlord to account.

**3 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard.**  
We must engage with other relevant parties so that you live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods, and feel safe in your homes.

**4 The Tenancy Standard.**  
This sets out how homes should be fairly allocated, as well as requirements for how we manage tenancies.



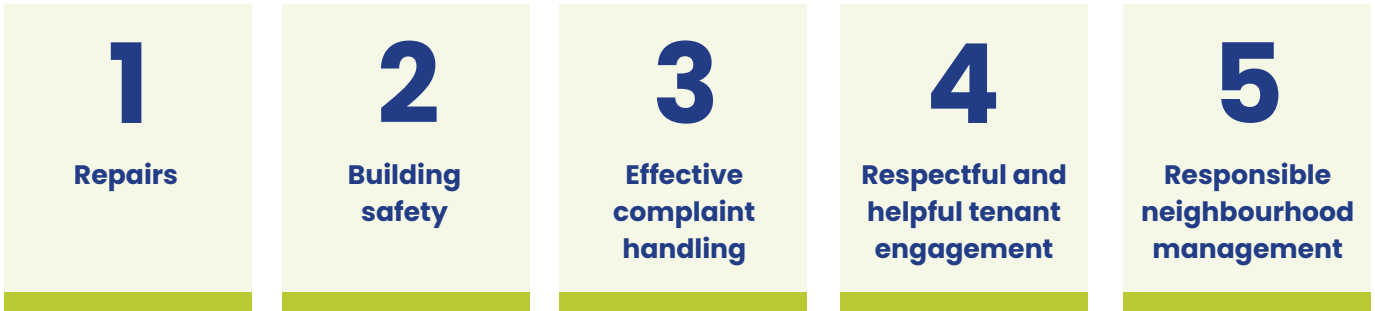




# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

As part of its revised powers and focus on Consumer Standards, the Regulator of Social Housing created 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

The TSMs cover five main themes:

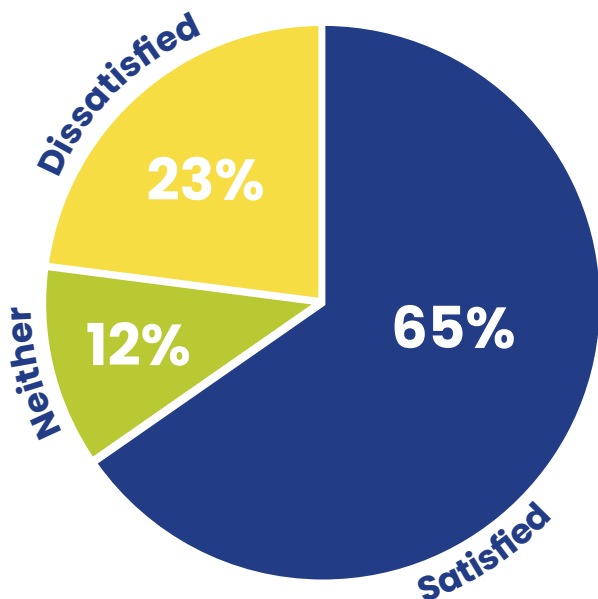


Out of the 22, ten are measured by management information (e.g., performance data) with 12 measured by customer perception surveys.

We are committed to providing the best-quality homes and services we can to all our customers and have already put in place a series of changes to improve our overall satisfaction levels.

## OVERALL SATISFACTION 2023/24

892 Tenants Surveyed





## You said, We did

We have listened to you and are working hard to develop and redesign services to deliver against your needs and expectations.

This has been supported by several initiatives, including: our Concierge service, which is delivering services across our estates; digital access via the My Account app; Down Your Way activities that involve Wolverhampton Homes' teams such as Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenancy Support and Repairs.

We have prioritised communal areas in response to customer concerns. The Tenancy and Leasehold teams are working closely with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Concierge and Estate Services teams to develop new ways of working that focus on communal areas, including:

- Increasing the presence of key members of staff from these teams on certain estates.
- Talking to colleagues in the City of Wolverhampton Council about how we can improve the handling of waste and fly-tipping.
- Developing more robust monitoring arrangements of the cleaning regime, particularly in relation to low-rise blocks of flats.



## Note from Shaun Aldis

### Chief Executive – Wolverhampton Homes



At Wolverhampton Homes, we are driven by our vision to provide high-quality services that respond to the voice and needs of our diverse customers, in line with the priorities of the city council.

We aim to create an environment where you, our customers, can enjoy a brilliant quality of life, in areas where you aspire to live and work. Our enduring social purpose is at the heart of everything we do and every decision we take.

The past year has been challenging for the social housing sector and the communities we serve. Additionally, we have also faced significant regulatory changes that require us to meet higher standards of service delivery.

We are committed to ensuring that the homes we offer are truly affordable and as energy efficient as possible. We work closely with our shareholder, the City of Wolverhampton Council, to maintain and improve our existing housing stock.

In delivering our services, we continue to listen to, and to value, your voice and feedback. We regularly review the Tenant Satisfaction Measures to monitor how well we are meeting your needs and expectations, and to identify areas for improvement. We also strive to comply with the Consumer Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing, which ensure we provide quality homes, fair treatment, effective complaints handling and meaningful opportunities for tenant involvement and empowerment. We believe that listening to and learning from you is essential for achieving our mission and vision.

**Shaun Aldis**







@wolveshomes

**Wolverhampton Homes**

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[www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk](http://www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk)

