



Tenants' Annual Housing Report 2017-18

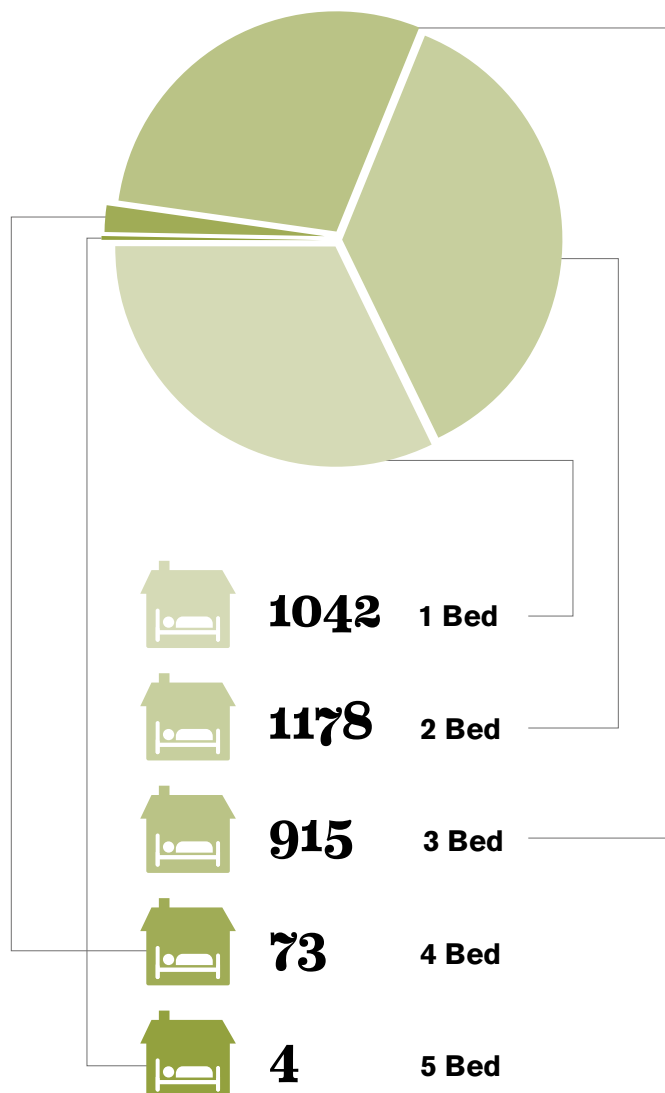
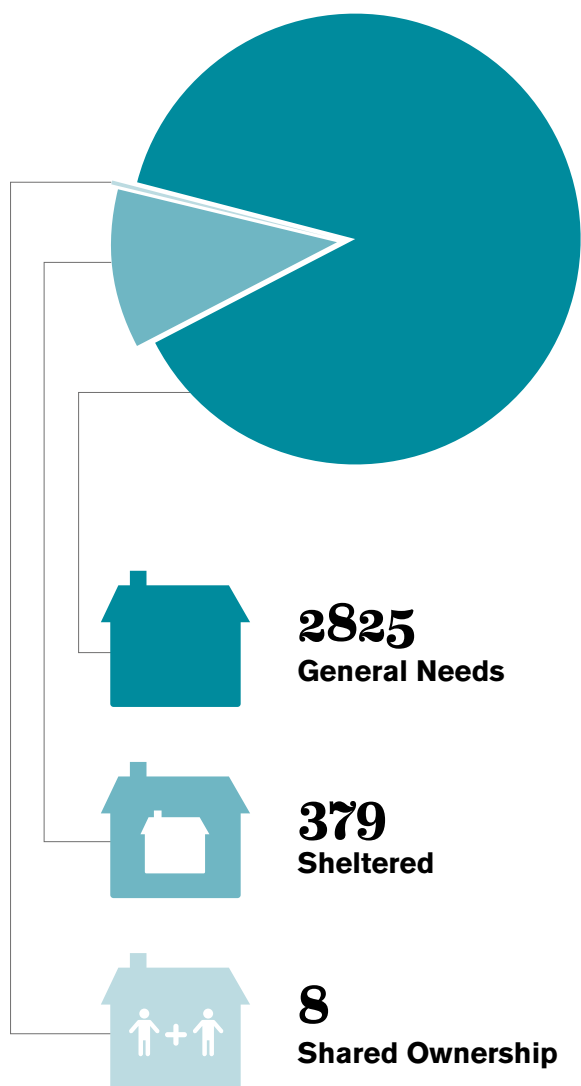




3212
Properties



185 council properties were let out this year, plus we were able to nominate **51** people to become tenants of homes owned by Housing Associations. The average time it took to re-let our council homes was **21 days**.

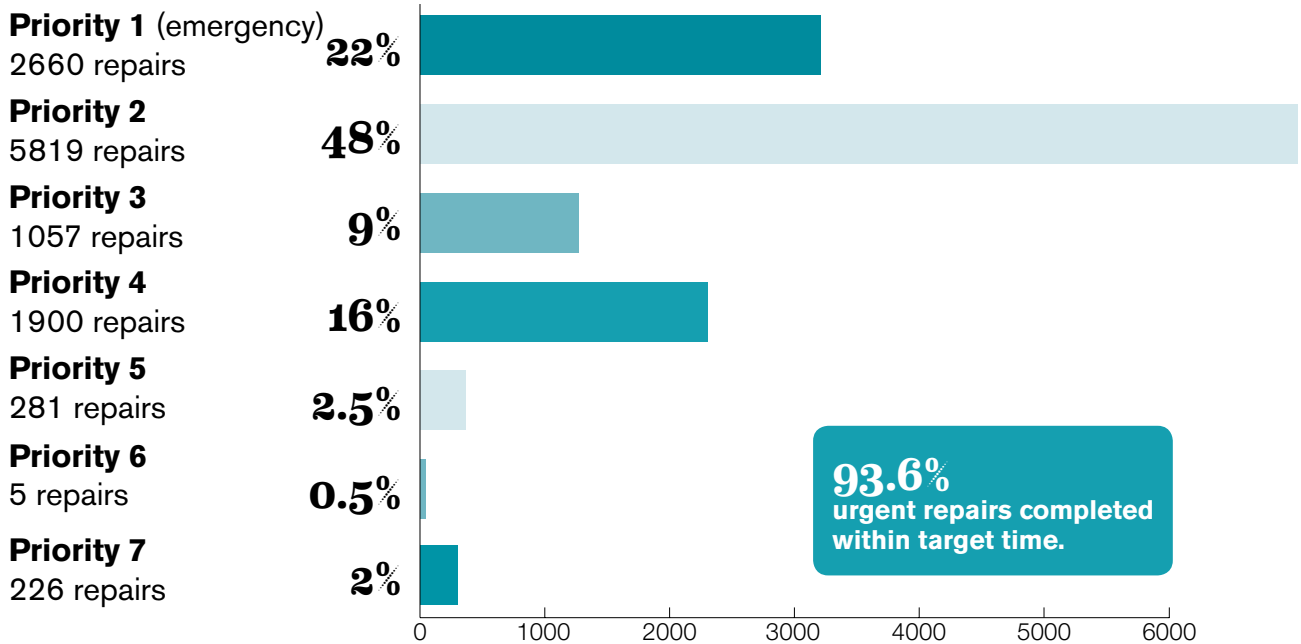


We also have **268** leasehold properties.

This year we built an additional 17 homes and 8 tenants purchased their council property under the Right to Buy Scheme.



We carried out **11,948** repairs this year.



79% of our tenants were satisfied with their repair.



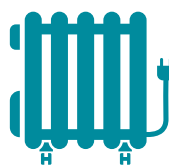
As part of our Major Works programme, this year we installed:



74
Kitchens



40
Bathrooms



106
Central heating system upgrades



15
Homes with new UPVC windows



11
Insulation Installations

£2,431,347 was spent on responsive repairs/empty properties.

£1,189,000 was spent on planned repairs and improvements.

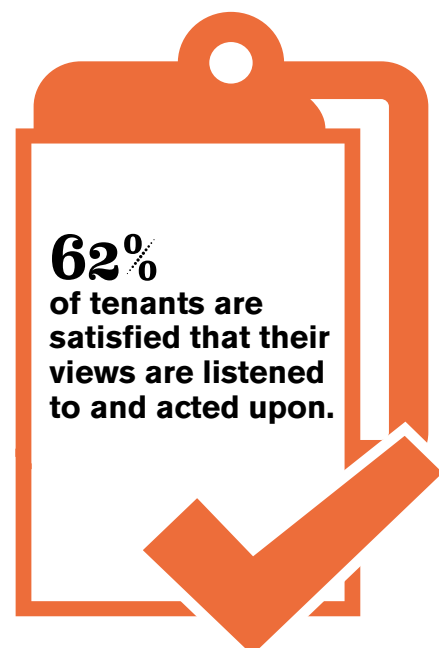
£5,113,000 was spent on major repairs & improvements.

The number of rooms in the roof/extensions built was **1**.

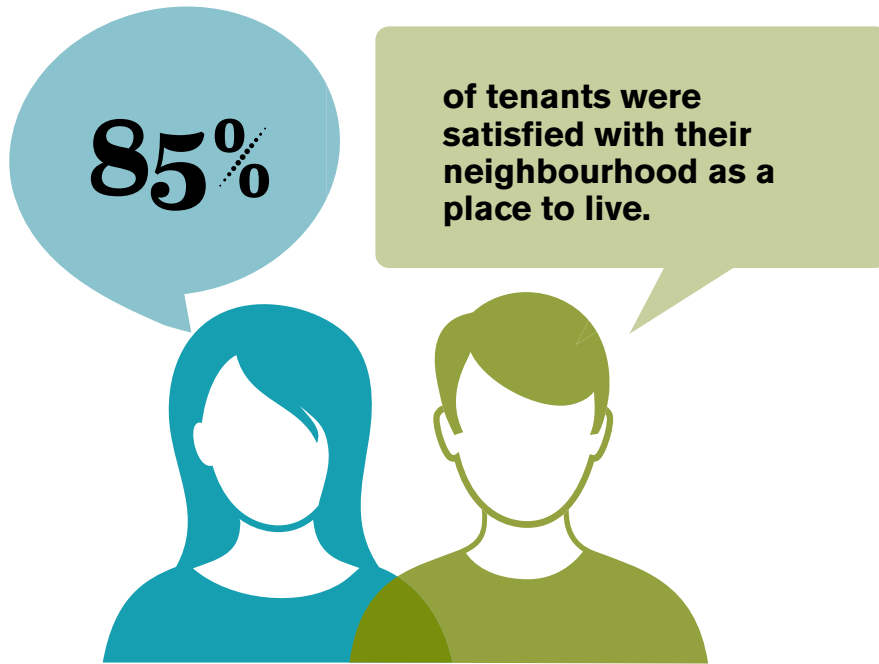
It is estimated that **97.35%** of our homes met the Government's Decent Homes Standard with **48** homes that didn't.



- **6 active tenants and residents associations** across the district worked to improve their local area with fundraising to enable them to continue to hold community events, such as the successful summer play-schemes for children in Lewes and a community barbecue in Landport. They continue to support and run the local Food Banks.
- **7 training events** were held for tenants on Food Hygiene, Fundraising, Finance workshop, Dementia friend, Report writing, Networking, Cooking on a budget. A total of 52 places were taken up by tenants.
- **82 tenants** attended our Tenants Annual Conference in November.
- A total of **2 full tenant scrutiny reviews** were completed. This has supported the online form for requesting repairs.
- **1 mystery shopping** activity.

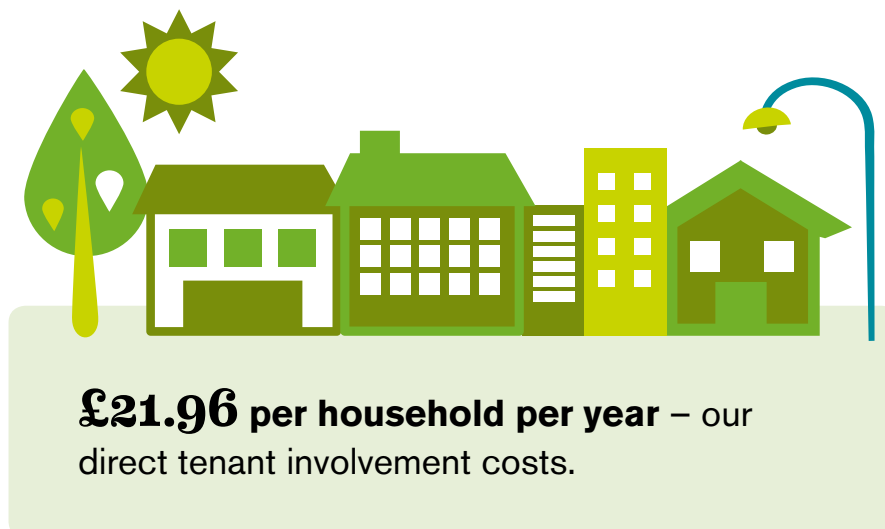


Neighbourhood and Tenant Involvement



Our main tenants organisation, Tenants Organisation of Lewes District (TOLD) has continued to support us in delivering better services to you. This year there were 10 TOLD meetings with senior management team and 8 meetings with committee only.

Three ad hoc consultations took place to look at voids, finance and repairs priorities.



Supporting our Tenants

Our **Tenants Resource Centre** in Lewes is available to support tenants who are carrying out community business. During 2017/18, in excess of 190 meetings were held here, including weekly Food Banks, TOLD meetings, training sessions, staff meetings, a community café, social events for tenants and health and wellbeing opportunities.

For more information on using the centre, please contact 01273 487249.

Although we do everything in our power to help tenants who are having difficulty paying their rent, we do evict tenants who continually fail to pay. Sadly, in this period we evicted 3 households due to serious rent arrears.

80

The number of people in temporary accommodation at the end of March.

26

tenants were directly involved in consultations and focus groups.

171

The number of homelessness applications we received.

405

The number of households that we and our partnering agencies assisted to prevent or relieve homelessness.

36

The number of households we assisted to downsize with our Tenants Incentive Scheme.

66

The number of homelessness applicants that we accepted a duty to house.

85%

of our tenants were satisfied with the overall service that they receive from us.

1904

tenants were contacted for consultations and events using text or email.

Compliments and Complaints

74% of our tenants are satisfied with how we deal with their enquiries.

Sheltered Housing

We have **379 sheltered housing properties** across our district which consist of a mixture of flats and bungalows.



92%

of respondents to survey confirmed they are satisfied with overall sheltered housing service.



52%

of respondents confirmed they have WIFI in their homes.



98%

of respondents to survey confirmed they are supported to maintain their independence.



Lewes District Council, have continued to run social activities and events as part of the *Join Us* joint project. This has included an Easter Tea, Pick of the Pops Dance, Quiz, Christmas Party.

Over the past year, sheltered tenants took part in a wide range of social activities:

- Many of the schemes run regular activities with partner organisations which we have continued this year e.g. SCDA, Making Magical Moments (dementia support group), Happy Club (dementia support group) and we support the Care for the Carers group.
- Many of the schemes took part in Older Peoples Day activities in October as part of the county wide initiative.



Successes and Future Plans

New Council Homes –The Council is having 6 modular affordable bungalows built for a site in Ashington Gardens, Peacehaven. The homes will be constructed off site at a factory in Newhaven and it is envisaged that some will be completed early in March.

Tenant Annual Conference –

The Annual conference for tenants and leaseholders will take place in January 2019 at the View Hotel in Eastbourne. Attendees will be able to choose from a range of workshops including effective team building, cooking on a budget, don't be scammed and energy saving. Information stalls from a range of partners will also be available to provide advice, guidance and freebies to take away.

Tenant Involvement Strategy –

Homes First staff and residents across both the Eastbourne area and Lewes district will be working together throughout 2018-19 to review how we involve residents in the decisions which affect their homes and local communities. Residents will be asked to respond to a postal and online consultation. A steering group will then be set up to ensure that these responses are used to shape a new Tenant Involvement Strategy. The 3-year strategy will launch in 2019 and will include a range of new ways for residents to get involved and influence how services are delivered.

Retirement Housing Review

– In 2018 Homes First staff will work with residents in retirement housing to identify priorities for service improvements. Consultation meetings will be undertaken in each of the Retirement Courts across LDC to discuss the development of a new set of 'Service Commitments'. Throughout 2019-20, we will continue to engage residents in a range of projects aimed at delivering further service improvements.

Recycling – The Project is now complete. Both councils agreed to reduce the use of single-use plastic (SUP) in council offices in relation to officer and member day to day activity. The councils have taken the decision to no longer order plastic cups and instead source recyclable alternatives where possible and permanent-use cups and cutlery have been purchased for use in council kitchens. Staff signed up to a pledge (Single-use Plastic Pledge) to reduce our use of single-use plastic.

Achievements include

- Between June and December 2018 the use of SUP items used during day-to-day activity and the working day (cutlery, bottles, plastic cups, cardboard cups with plastic lining, stirrers, plastic bags) decreased from 11,096 to 669: a reduction of 10,427 items - 94 per cent.
- Staff surveys provided insights on opinions and behaviour of staff. The results indicate increases in awareness of SUP and its issues, increases in colleagues now using no plastic bottles, cups or stirrers, take-away coffee cups, disposable cutlery and drinking straws; and decreases in the use of plastic bags, plastic or polystyrene takeaway boxes, plastic food containers, and plastic wrap each week.
- We now have permanent cups and cutlery in council offices.
- We have up a SUP webpage for The Hub which sets out the project, progress made and lists who has signed the pledge as well as links to other useful reports.

For every £100 we had available to spend:

£88.77
came from rent payments for housing



£7.76
came from service charges



£2.54
came from rents from commercial properties like shops and garages

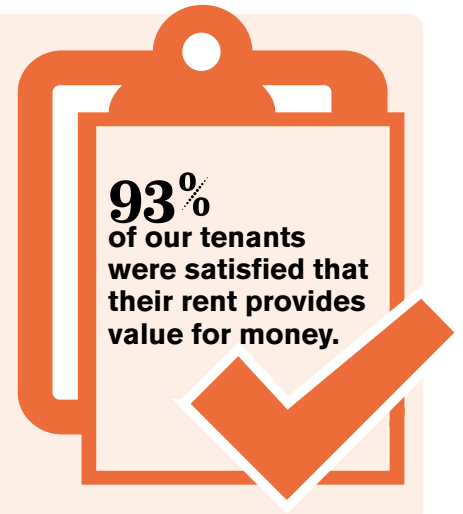


94p
came from the Council's General Fund towards the upkeep of open spaces used by both Council tenants and residents



Value for money

We're committed to getting the most value for money out of the income we receive. Average rent for one of our general needs properties is **£90.43**. In 2017/18 we collected **98.32%** of rent that was due.



And for every £100 we spent:

£32.75
went on putting money aside for future repairs



£30.72
went on repairs and maintenance



£15.90
went on servicing the money we have borrowed for our housing



£13.24
went on running the organisation



£5.59
went on providing site specific services such as grounds maintenance and lighting



£3.75
went to help pay for major works to our properties, and the modernisation of IT support systems



£1.76
went on the Supported Housing Service



£1.88
went on a range of other expenditures



-£5.58
was added to the balances to use in future





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If you need this leaflet in large print, braille, audio format or another language please contact us.

If you have any questions about anything you read here or you would like to find out how you can get involved please contact us at: Tenants Resource Centre, 2a Horsfield Road, Lewes, BN7 2TA. Email tenant.involvement@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

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