



Tenants' Annual Housing Report 2016-17

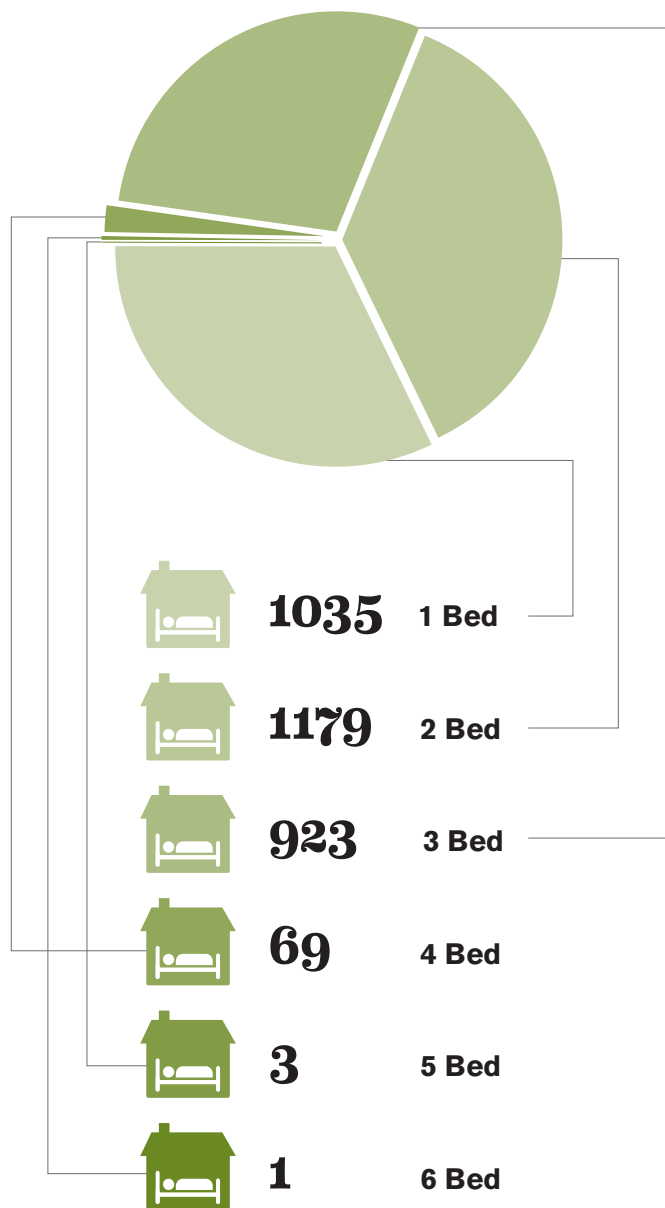
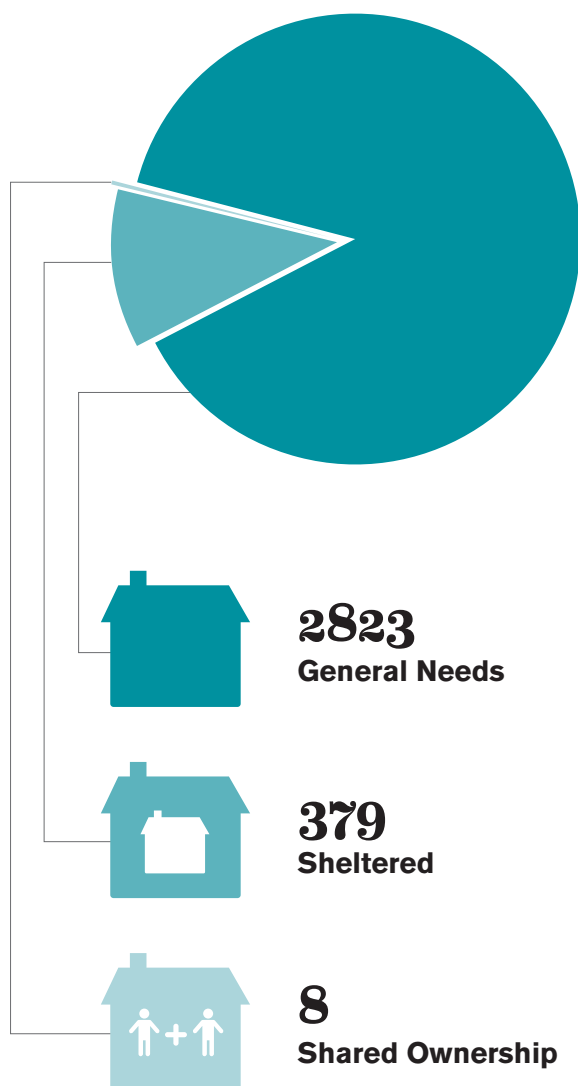




3210
Properties



211 council properties were let out this year, plus we were able to nominate **63** people to become tenants of homes owned by Housing Associations. The average time it took to re-let our council homes was **20 days**.

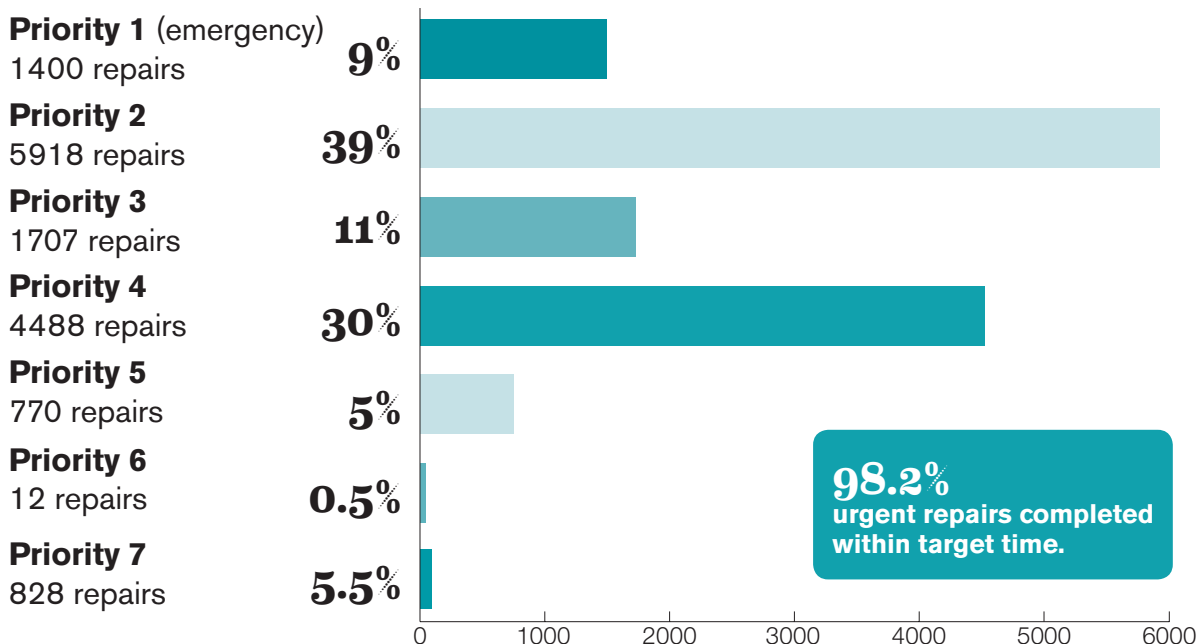


We also have **262** leasehold properties.

This year we built an additional 5 homes and 14 tenants purchased their council property under the Right to Buy Scheme.



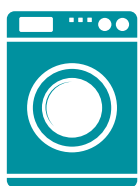
We carried out **15,123** repairs this year.



82% of our tenants were satisfied with their repair.



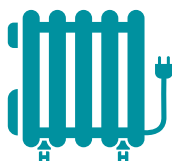
As part of our Major Works programme, this year we installed:



67
Kitchens



7
Bathrooms



235
Central heating system upgrades



106
Air source heat pumps



328
Homes with new UPVC windows



597
PV panels installed



27
Insulation Installations

£2.4 million was spent on planned repairs and improvements in 2016/17.

It is estimated that **98%** of our homes meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. The most recent stock survey was completed in the

summer of 2016 to ensure the results were up-to-date and reliable. LDC has also configured a new Asset Management System called Keystone which will be used for storing and maintaining the new survey data.



£60,000

Every year we spend around £60,000 on improving the appearance of our communal areas and the quality of life for tenants living nearby. Tenants help to prioritise what this money is spent on.

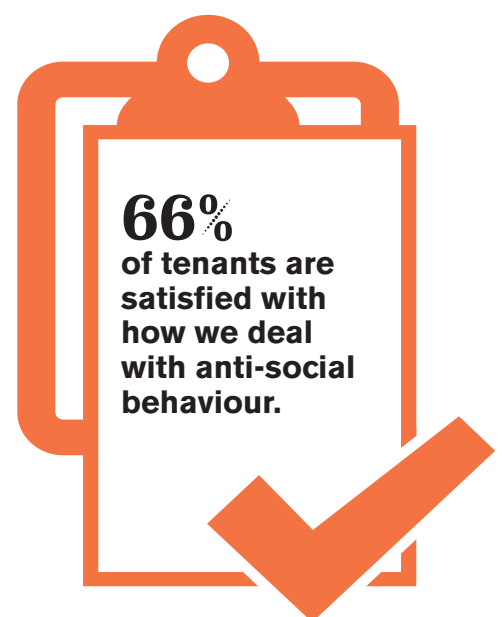
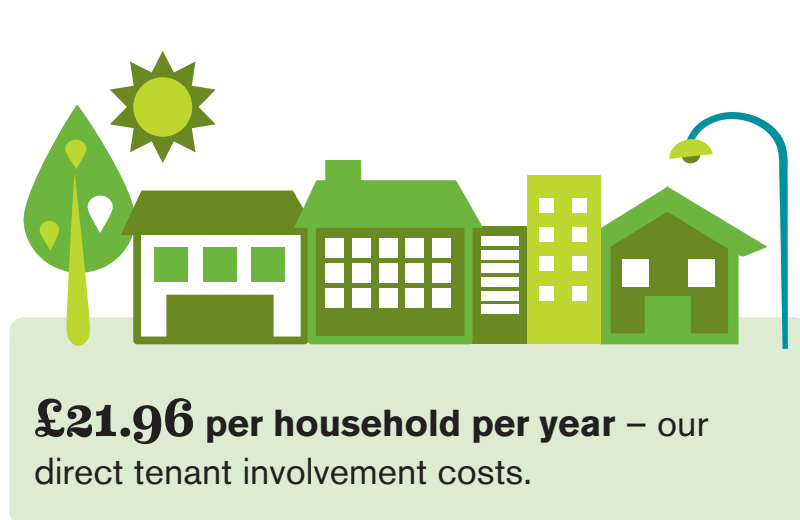
During last year 32 areas benefitted directly from this funding. Projects included solar lighting in Newton Road, garden tables and chairs at Meridian Court, a complete overhaul of the communal garden area at Lexden Court in Seaford and the provision of water butts at The Riddens in Plumpton.

- **7 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.
- **8 training events** were held for tenants on Food Hygiene, First Aid, Avoiding Scams, Committee Skills and Fundraising for Projects. A total of 67 training places were taken up by tenants.
- **70 tenants** attended our Tenants Annual Conference in November. We held working groups on Keeping Healthy, DIY jobs and Accessing IT.
- A total of **8 full tenant scrutiny reviews** were completed. This has supported the introduction of a new online form for requesting repairs.

68%
of tenants are satisfied that their views are listened to and acted upon with 18% neither satisfied or dissatisfied.



Our main tenants organisation, Tenants Organisation of Lewes District (TOLD) have continued to support us in delivering better services to you, particularly this year in making sure rents were affordable and held below 80% on all new homes being built. They also helped 75 homes in successfully getting a refund on over paid service charges.



Supporting our Tenants

Our **Tenants Resource Centre** in Lewes is available to support tenants who are carrying out community business. During 2016/17, 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.

66

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

151

The number of disabled adaptations fitted this year.

146

The number of homelessness applications we received.

28

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

26

tenants were directly involved in consultations and focus groups.

82

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

328

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

88%

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

1326

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

Compliments and Complaints

We need to know when we get things wrong so we can improve in the future. This year we received **42 complaints** (32 about property services and 10 about neighbourhood management services).

We also like to hear when we get things right. This year we received **4 written compliments**.

80% of our tenants are satisfied with how we deal with their enquiries.



Successes and Future Plans

New Council Homes – Lewes District Council has completed its first project to build new affordable housing on some of its underused garage sites. Five sites were selected and 22 new homes were built, with a mix of one and two bedroom flats and houses. The homes were allocated to households on the housing register and rented out at affordable rent (approximately 65% of the market rent).

Cleaning Contract – The Council will shortly invite tenders for the cleaning services provided to tenants and leaseholders living in blocks of flats. The cleaning service was last reviewed in 2013. The new cleaning contract is being procured jointly with our partners Eastbourne Homes Ltd, the housing management arm of Eastbourne Borough Council.

Repairs & Maintenance – We have commenced the procurement of a new repairs and voids contract, as a single service covering both of these areas of service as well as aids and adaptations.

Self-assessment – As part of the self-assessment review, we are expecting to implement changes to the voids process, as recommended by the panel, which will include joint pre-termination visits with Surveyors and Housing Officers both attending, better enabling us to assess the condition of our stock; early identification of the scale of works required in the void period and better management of our assets in relation to the provision of facilities for people with disabilities. We expect to roll these out when the new repairs contract becomes operational.

Rental Exchange – We joined the rental exchange on 1 July 2016 because we wanted to help you to address the gap in the credit history of tenants. This continues to be a success with our tenants having their rental account working for them.

Health and Housing Agenda – We are working with Health and Social Care providers to better align access to services.

Training for new skills – Lewes District Council has organised some key skills training for tenants in partnership with the SETUP organisation. Details of scheduled courses will be published in District News.

Recycling – We are making it easier for you to recycle by introducing a new wheelie bin for all of your recyclables. The new service will be rolled out across the district in stages through 2017/18.

Sheltered Housing

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



93%

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



94%

of respondents confirmed their personalised support plan had been completed in the previous year.



47%

of respondents confirmed they have WIFI in their homes.



84%

of respondents confirmed they socialise weekly or more often, a big increase on the previous year.



96%

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 and training (and remove the existing bullet points)

- Many of our sheltered tenants have completed their food hygiene training in the last year and we ran a project to make improvements in the schemes providing guidance and support around food hygiene to support the social groups with catering for their own events.

- Many of the schemes run regular activities with partner organisations which we have expanded in the last year e.g. SCDA, Making Magical Moments (dementia support group), Happy Club (dementia support group) and we support the Care for the Carers group.
- There has been a large improvement programme running across all of the Lewes block schemes. Six of the schemes have had lifts replaced/refurbished. Five of the schemes have had the communal boilers replaced/refurbished. Two of the schemes have had new ceilings and lighting installed. All of the schemes have had extensive fire safety works with changes to alarm systems, fire doors, heat detector installation, new signage and new GERDA boxes being fitted.



For every £100 we had available to spend:

£89.03
came from rent payments for housing



£7.41
came from service charges



£2.57
came from rents from commercial properties like shops and garages



99p
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 **£91.36**. In 2016/17 we collected **97.61%** of rent that was due.



£31.07
went on putting money aside for future repairs



£29.35
went on repairs and maintenance



£19.04
went on servicing the money we have borrowed for our housing



£10.97
went on running the organisation



£5.48
went on providing site specific services such as grounds maintenance and lighting



£1.95
went on the Supported Housing Service



£1.27
went on a range of other expenditures



88p
was added to the balances to use in future



And for every £100 we spent:



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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.participation@lewes.gov.uk Telephone: 01273 487249.

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