

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH HOMES

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

HOW WE SPEND

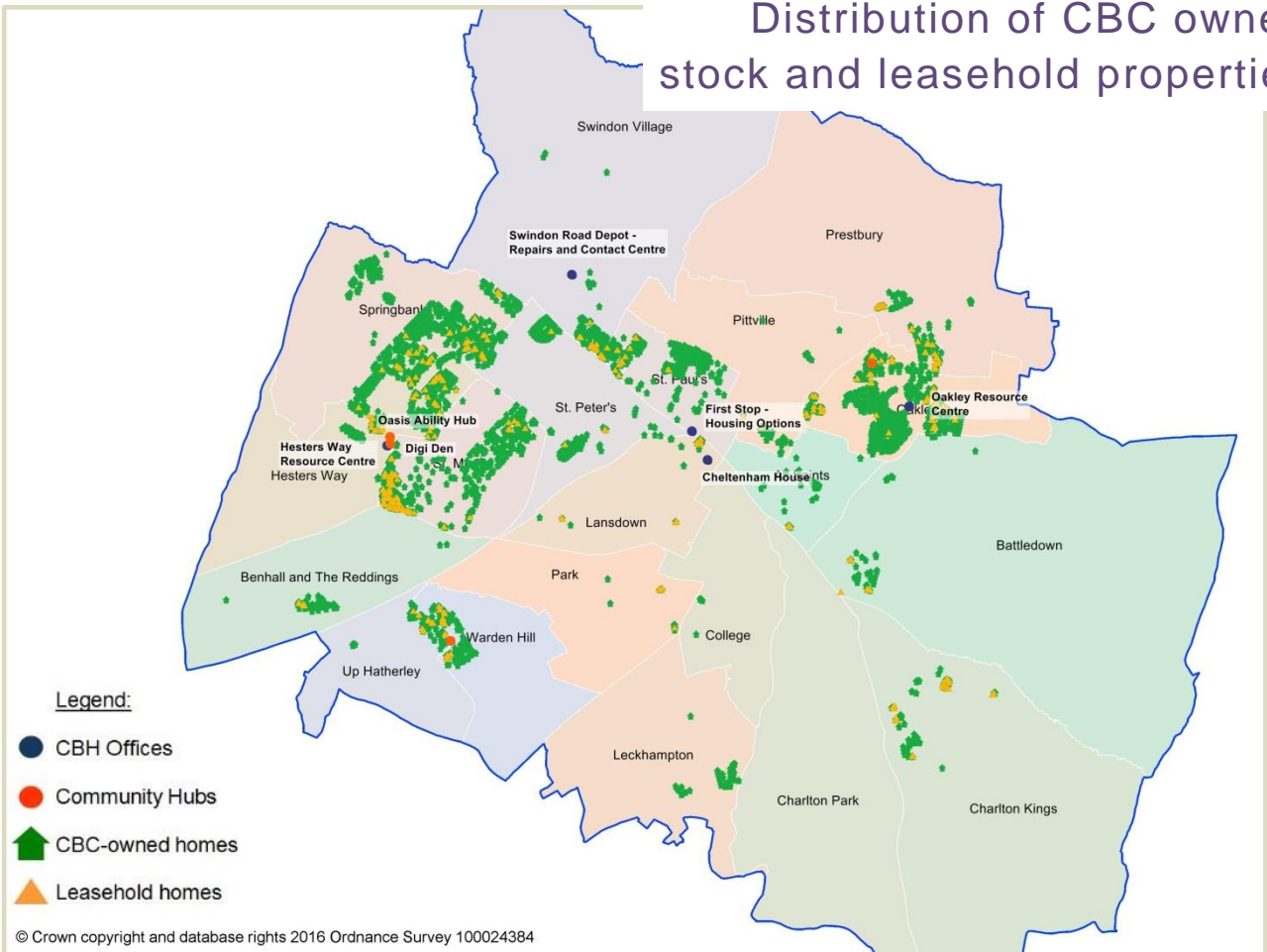


JANUARY 2019

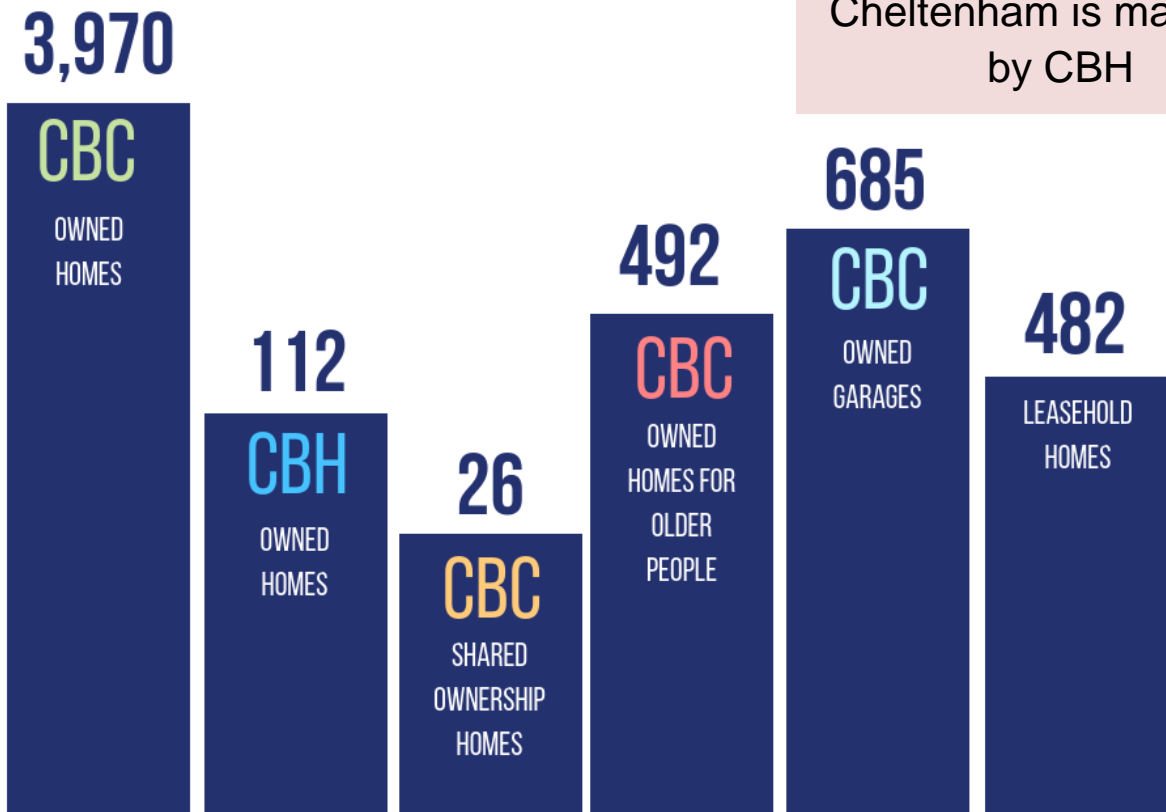
www.cbh.org |   



Distribution of CBC owned stock and leasehold properties



Almost 1 in 10 homes in Cheltenham is managed by CBH



ABOUT CBH

We are Cheltenham Borough Council's housing ALMO, set up in 2003 for the not-for-profit management and maintenance of council-owned homes. A 30 year Management Agreement sets out our relationship enabling clear plans to be set for the future and to continue fulfilling the aims of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, which are:

- ✓ **Maintain homes to a high standard**
- ✓ **Build new homes**
- ✓ **Provide value added services to people and communities**

We successfully manage the HRA by identifying the need to spend on homes and services each year; then investing that to deliver repairs and improvements, provide new homes, and to deliver high quality services to tenants and leaseholders. We monitor and manage spend throughout the year and identify efficiency savings on an ongoing basis that we **re-invest in services or homes**.

Working together

Our tenants and leaseholders give their time, energy and commitment to help us understand what is important to them and, in doing so, shape the services we provide. Tenants' overall satisfaction with CBH's services has **increased to 88%** placing CBH among the higher performing housing providers in England and Wales.

CBH is successful because the people that work for us demonstrate **pride, enthusiasm and dedication** in what they do. Our most recent figures show that 96% of colleagues reported that they were satisfied with CBH as an employer, again one of the highest figures in the housing sector. We have clear plans for the future and a robust approach to achieving value for money (VFM) in the HRA. We are successfully **delivering additional savings** over and above those identified in response to the Government's 1% annual rent reductions, which remain in place until 2020. We are achieving this at a time of **unprecedented change and challenge** for the housing sector.

We are a **committed** and **passionate** local organisation. We share your vision for Cheltenham to be a 'place where everyone thrives' and support the delivery of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy. We have an excellent relationship with CBC; it is transparent and suitably challenging, it is also collaborative as demonstrated by the recent work to arrive at the approved **Housing Investment Plan** enabling CBH to access a potential £100m to deliver **500 new, high quality homes for Cheltenham**.

Delivering added value

We operate within the most deprived communities across Cheltenham and by understanding what is important, and the local pressures faced, we make use of our skills and knowledge to provide **enhanced services** to make a positive difference to people's lives. We deliver advice for people dealing with **benefits and money issues**; support people to **find work and training** opportunities; provide hubs for and deliver **community activities**; provide **digital inclusion** opportunities; work closely with **local schools** to help students to remain in mainstream education; and support local partners to help people start up their own businesses through the **'STRIVE' project**.

DELIVERING IN THE HRA, 2017/18

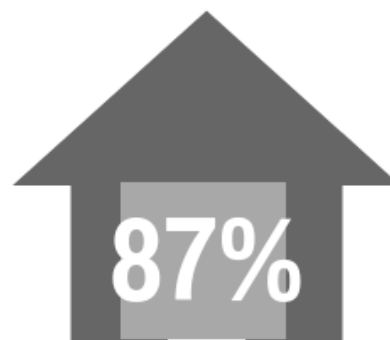
Maintaining homes to a high standard & build new homes

The infographics below provide a look behind the numbers in the HRA, providing context and a selection of achievements that highlight just some of the excellent work that went on in 17/18.



meet decent standard end of 2017/18

delivered
10,052
responsive repairs



of tenants happy with the quality of their home*

99%



of all emergency, urgent and routine repairs completed on target

99%

tenants satisfied with the repairs carried out

93%

completed on first visit

100%

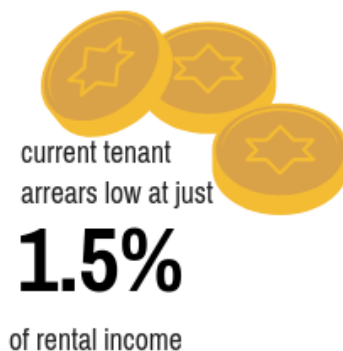
satisfaction of sign up process for new tenants



approx. 400 new tenants



to re-let an empty home which required minor repairs

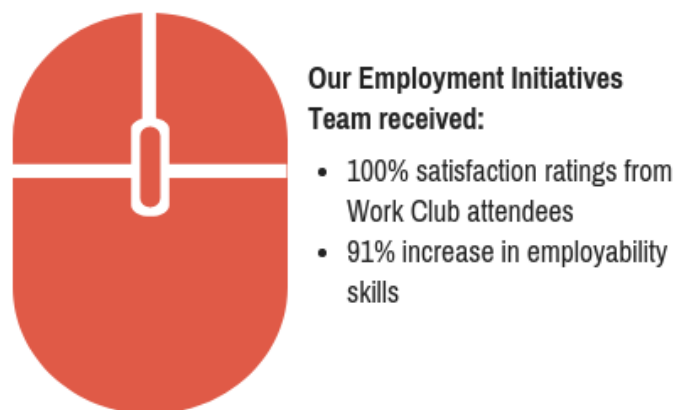
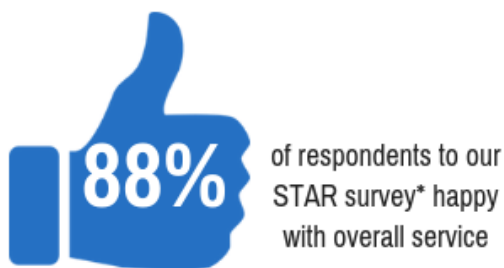
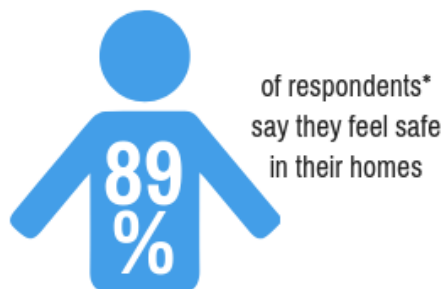


* Taken from comprehensive biennial STAR survey. Just over 1,000 tenants responded – almost ¼ of tenancies.

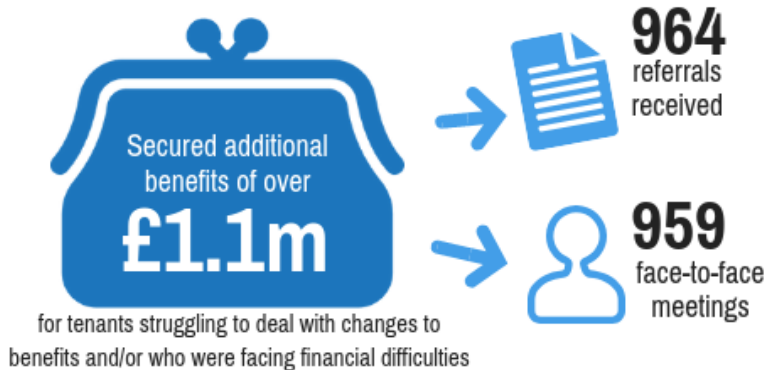
DELIVERING IN THE HRA, 2017/18

Provide value added services to people and communities

Where appropriate, CBH also delivers more than high quality landlord services: providing people with support and advice in areas that will enable them to improve their quality of life.



Housing Options Team secured **£1.74m** in unclaimed and backdated benefits



* Taken from comprehensive biennial STAR survey. Just over 1,000 tenants responded – almost ¼ of tenancies.

ENSURING VFM IN THE FUTURE

The previous two pages provided an overview of some of the excellent services we are delivering to meet the needs expressed by tenants and leaseholders. Our **Vision** and **Aims** help us continue to do this effectively and efficiently, while enhancing services further.

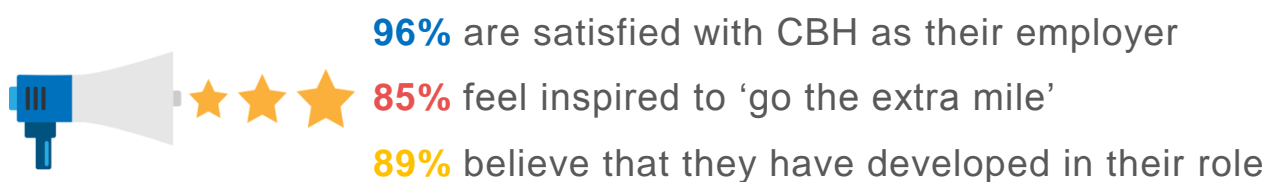
Our Vision: **Make Cheltenham a better place to live by providing great homes and stronger communities**

Our Aims:  **Great Homes**  **Stronger Communities**  **Inspired People**

We are clear that **achieving good value for money** (VFM) is not just concerned with reducing costs; it is about understanding the need to spend and then managing that effectively, to maintain **strong core services** and continue to achieve positive change and outcomes.



At the heart of this is the recognition that we must look after our CBH colleagues, ensuring that they, in turn, are able to **look after our customers**. We want employees to feel valued and inspired to 'go the extra mile' for our customers. Our People Plan was developed through in-depth consultation, with colleagues helping to shape its direction and the suite of activities it is currently delivering. At the heart of this is our **#WeAreCBH** group, a collection of 21 colleagues who volunteer to be a consultative body and help deliver these actions. Satisfaction has improved with a recent survey returning impressive figures:












Our systems and processes are being improved as part of a major programme of work that is due to end in 19/20. This will enable employees to **work more efficiently and effectively than ever before** and be better able to meet customers' needs. Our structures and resources to deliver our plans and promises are regularly reviewed to ensure they are appropriate.

We have clear and measurable plans in place setting our priority areas of work, to ensure that we are always improving and seeking to find new and more innovative ways of working. On the following page is a selection of some of those priority areas of work that are being delivered now, that will ensure we achieve our Aims and maintain **excellent value for money**.







We Aim to provide Great Homes by:

-  **Improving systems** – to make it easier for customers to interact with us online
-  **Enabling Asset Modelling** – to make sure we have a clear understanding of the costs involved in maintaining each property enabling even more informed decisions about investment
-  **Continuing the ‘Cheltenham West Vision’ regeneration project** – refining the potential options to regenerate areas of Cheltenham to improve the quality of life for the people living there
-  **Providing new windows & doors** – across all homes to improve security and energy efficiency
-  **Deliver the solution for non-traditional build properties** –to refurbish and extend the life of these property types
-  **Insourcing existing works programmes** – to make best use of the skills we have in-house, improve quality and reduce costs
-  **Completing our Service Improvement Programme (SIP)** – which will develop and enhance the processes, applications and supporting technologies that enable CBH to deliver efficient & effective services into the future
-  **Managing Welfare Reform impacts** – to mitigate the effects that ongoing changes to benefits are having on tenants, people in need of social housing and the business
-  **Supplying new homes for Cheltenham** – this programme will be significantly expanded to help meet local housing need and balance CBC-owned stock lost to Right to Buy. Recent developments with CBC will enable a number of routes to be explored for the supply of both affordable and private homes including s106, acquisition and new build. We are looking into innovative construction techniques, for example modular and 3D printed builds, where this is appropriate






We Aim to build Stronger Communities by:

-  **Supporting community projects and initiatives** – through sourcing external funding, resourcing community organisations and harnessing partner support and capacity
-  **Enhancing our role as a local community builder** – to work with partners to deliver locality based community investment
-  **Moving away from direct delivery** – to true partnership working
-  **Understanding our Social Value** – to demonstrate the social value we bring to communities



We Aim to deliver this with Inspired People by:

-  **Developing people** – by enhancing our support for colleagues to help them achieve their potential through opportunities for personal and professional development we empower people to challenge the business where they feel something can be done better, or spot where they make a difference for customers, and then go the extra mile to achieve that
-  **Enhancing recruitment** – by modernising our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are attracting and recruiting excellent people who add extra value to the business and are committed to helping us achieve our Aims. Our suite of benefits help colleagues to maintain good health and wellbeing at work and at home
-  **Living our Values** – by continuing to listen to our colleagues to understand their needs and adapt the business to support them our colleagues are continually shaping the business. Our #WeAreCBH group is delivering our People Plan with colleagues, ensuring they feel valued and inspired to live the values they chose: #WeAreSupportive, #WeAreOne Team, #WeAreRespectful and #WeAreTrustworthy

ENSURING VFM

We are responsible for managing the resources of both CBH and the Council's HRA. A suite of Key Performance Indicators demonstrates the balance across costs, performance and satisfaction.

We make use of an established sector model to provide an understanding of Costs per Property (CPP) for the financial year just completed and set targets based on future budgets: they are directly linked to actual spend and budgets. These, combined with performance and satisfaction levels, demonstrate **the balance across the three strands of value for money: costs, performance and satisfaction**. Our current suite of VFM KPIs is included on the following pages, aligned to our Aims, and show outturn at the end of 17/18 and challenging targets to 19/20. Commentary is included to provide some context to the numbers.

Key to RAG colours:

On or better than target Slightly off target Off target



Providing Great Homes

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	year-end outturn compared to target (as a RAG)	year-end target (approved)	year-end target (draft)
Direct cost per property of Major Works & Cyclical Maintenance	£1,756	£1,867	£2,284
% dwellings non-decent at the end of the period	0.37%	0.97%	0.35%
% dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.81%	100%	100%
Average SAP rating (2009 methodology)	71.67	72	72.2
Windows and doors total installations	3,117	1,768	1,045
STAR satisfaction with overall quality of the home	87.19%	89%	89%
Number new homes supplied	9	25	41
Direct cost per property of responsive repairs & void works	£568	£581	£580
% of emergency, urgent and routine repairs completed within target	99.04%	99%	99%
% tenants satisfied with repairs carried out	99.22%	99%	99%
Direct cost per property of rent arrears and collection	£89	£100	£101
Current arrears as % of rental income (excluding court costs)	1.51%	2.86%	3.81%
Rent collected from current & former tenants as % rent due (excluding arrears brought forward)	99.19%	97%	97%
Direct cost per property of Lettings	£38	£42	£44
% Rent lost through CBC dwellings becoming vacant excluding temporary furnished	0.68%	0.71%	0.73%
Ave time taken to re-let minor void CBC properties (exc. temporary Furnished Accommodation and James Donovan Court) in days	17.85	16.5 days	19 days
Number of downsizers moved	New	18	22
Complaints closed at stage 1 - % within agreed timescales	100%	96%	96%
Average time taken to respond to initial complaints	7.6 days	12 days	10 days
Number of complaints per 1000 properties	9.47	13	12
Percentage of contact centre calls answered	92.98%	96%	tbc
% online customer contact	New	7%	12%
Meeting CBH financial plan and budget targets	New	£58,000	£45,000
Meeting HRA financial plan and budget targets	New	£2,180,200	£1,573,400

Major works and Cyclical Maintenance

It is vital to maintain appropriate capital investment in homes, based on up to date data sourced from our stock surveys: this enables decency levels and the long term viability of the stock to be maintained. Changes in costs each year reflect the different levels of spend that is required as part of the planned investment profile (30years long, with detailed plans for the next 5years): the increases in CPP reflects our desire to modernise stock to narrow the gap between new and existing properties and investment in non-traditional properties. It also takes into account feedback from tenants, which has seen an increased shower installation programme developed.

When compared with the external peer group, CPP is worse than the average figure, however Local Authorities and ALMOs tend to have an older stock profile than the majority of the sector, requiring greater investment. The range of indicators in the table above shows strong performance against local targets and future targets are challenging, maintaining a clear direction of travel. The non-decency target reflects the decision to pause decent homes work on a small number of non-traditional properties that are awaiting options appraisal. SAP figures have risen as a consequence of investment in energy reduction initiatives, and the ongoing windows and doors replacement programme.

Responsive repairs and void works

The responsive repair service is a flagship service for tenants that delivers emergency, urgent and more routine responsive repairs. CPP figures are subject to the number and type of repairs raised, or exceptional weather during the year. Prudent budgeting takes this into account and, means that future year-end targets show a higher CPP. Void costs are affected by the number of terminations within a year and the state of repair of those homes, both of which can fluctuate significantly.

Current CPP figures are better than average when compared with our peer group. Repairs completed within target time remains excellent and satisfaction levels very high, both positioning CBH in the top quartiles for the sector. In order to improve efficiency and quality for tenants our current and future plans for this area are to insource more types of work.



Our responsive repairs service is very important to and highly regarded by tenants: over 10,000 repairs were delivered during 2017/18, with satisfaction levels running at 99%

Rent Arrears and Collection

CPP for 17/18 is better than the target modelled and slightly worse than the sector average when compared with our peer group. We have proactively resourced the housing revenues team to deal with the challenges faced by both tenants and the business following changes to the Welfare System and the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) in Cheltenham. This has been carefully modelled and has enabled continued strong rent performance with levels demonstrating top quartile performance. Evictions for rent arrears are a last resort, we always seek to provide support through our benefit and money advice and rent collection teams to sustain tenancies and these numbers are some of the lowest in the sector. Future targets are arrived at following analysis of in-year change and use of sector modelling tools: they reflect the continuing challenges as the roll out of UC continues across the town: currently 700 tenants are claiming UC, who have more arrears than the rest of the tenant population: a final total of around 3,000 UC is currently expected.

Lettings

CPP outturn was better than the target set for 2017/18. When compared with our peer group CPP is just below the average figure. This area continues to demonstrate strong performance, with the time it takes to re-let empty homes and the rent lost while they are empty both low: this outturn places CBH in the top quartile for the sector. Satisfaction with the allocation and lettings process remains high and the reasons for terminating a tenancy are regularly analysed to spot trends or emerging issues. In order to make the best use of Council homes and help older people who may be living in large properties with large gardens, there has been a drive to proactively support tenants to 'downsize' to more appropriately sized homes. This activity, along with the decision to act on tenant feedback to install showers when an appropriate property becomes empty, is resulting in slightly longer re-let times and future targets reflect this, whilst seeking to maintain top quartile sector performance levels.

Complaints and contact centre

Performance remains strong, reflecting the ease with which customers can make complaints and the effectiveness of the processes dealing with them. Learning from complaints and adapting services accordingly is a major part of the process. Contact Centre calls answered is slightly off target but future targets reflect the desire to drive that figure higher. The recently completed project to enhance the telephony system has resulted in a more resilient system with better call handling and functionality, enhancing the customer experience. It also provides improved reporting capabilities and more data which will help to improve performance and provide an opportunity to review the KPI reported to make sure it is the most appropriate measure.

Finances

These KPIs are a high level check supplementing the in-depth financial monitoring the CBH management fees included in the draft HRA budget account for 95% of CBH activity on a break even basis. The deficit derives from CBH's own stock of homes which is in line with the CBH business plan and is projected to change to a surplus in 2 years. The operating surplus on the HRA has been extracted from the budget presented to Council for approval.



Building Stronger Communities

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	year-end outturn compared to target (as a RAG)	year-end target (approved)	year-end target (draft)
Direct cost per property of ASB	£58.30	£55	£57
STAR tenants feeling safe in their own homes	89.25%	93%	97%
% closed ASB cases that were resolved	96.79%	98%	99%
% satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with	100%	95%	98%
Direct cost per property of Resident Involvement	£62	£75	£68
STAR % customers satisfied that CBH listens to their views and acts upon them	65.84%	70%	70%
Direct cost per property of Tenancy Management	£93	£93	£99
Overall customer satisfaction (%) STAR Survey	88.18%	89%	90%
STAR satisfaction with value for money of the rent	87.47%	88%	88%
Income generated on behalf of customer year to date	£1,105,268	£680,000	£1m

ASB

Actual CPP at the end of 2017/18 was better than the target modelled as part of the budget process. This was possible due to more efficient structures and processes bedding in over the year. CPP is worse than the sector average, but investment in ASB work reflects the importance in which it is held by tenants.

Our ASB team is proactive and preventative, seeking mediation between complainants and working with local schools to raise awareness of the consequences of anti-social behaviour. We also work very closely in partnership with the Police, supporting various community initiatives, for example the 'Cocooning' day held in The Moors estate, and crime operations like the 'County Lines' campaign aimed at tackling drug gangs exploiting young and vulnerable people. This area of service demonstrates strong performance and satisfaction; feedback from satisfaction surveys show that 89% of respondents felt safe in their homes and satisfaction with the way the case was handled reflects top quartile performance when compared to the sector.

Resident Involvement

CPP was better than the target set in 2017/18. This was achieved following a review of structures and roles. When compared with our peer group CPP is worse than the sector average but CBH places tenant engagement high on our agenda. A dedicated tenant scrutiny panel helps to monitor and develop services; over 840 tenants (18% of all tenancies) are currently involved with our teams, ensuring there is opportunity to shape current and future services to meet their needs.

Our new Customer Services Strategy will prioritise and focus efforts in this area over the coming years to drive up performance and satisfaction levels.

Tenancy Management

CPP has decreased, following a successful review of structures and processes. When compared with peers CPP is worse than average, placing CBH in the bottom quartile. Draft 19/20 targets are affected by a change in the methodology used to calculate the CPP and will be revisited in early 2019 once the enhancements are complete. Increasingly CBH is managing tenants with a range of issues and needs and, wherever possible, we seek to identify the most appropriate support and help tenants to sustain their tenancy. To that end our tenancy management team has close working links with social services and support groups. A programme of tenancy audits is drawing to a close in the coming year which will result in a framework to help identify where resources are best used.

CBH has made the decision to continue to invest appropriately in supporting strong communities through effective neighbourhood and community management and involving residents. This supports local agendas which CBH is well placed to help deliver. Overall customer satisfaction with CBH remains high, exceeding target and when compared with the sector is better than the average figure.




Our annual tenant and leaseholder awards bring people of all ages together to celebrate their achievements and communities


	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	year-end outturn compared to target (as a RAG)	year-end target (approved)	year-end target (draft)
Average number of working days lost to total sickness	8.86	8 days	7 days
Leavers as % of average number of employees	14.40	12%	12%
Percentage of staff satisfied with your organisation as an employer	64.96%	82%	96%
% of colleagues feeling they are developing at CBH	New	75%	90%
% of colleagues inspired to 'go the extra mile'	New	No Target	90%

Employees

Sickness and leavers figures are strong with both better than the sector average, future targets seek to improve these further. Satisfaction and feedback from our colleagues is regularly sourced and used to shape our values and Inspired People Plan. Current overall satisfaction with CBH as an employer sourced from a very recent survey shows that the figure has increased to 96%, which is top quartile performance when compared to the sector.

Our People Plan aims to make CBH a great place to work and create an environment where colleagues feel supported and empowered to make great things happen for both colleagues and customers alike. Future targets reflect our desire to further enhance satisfaction, development and engagement. Creating an environment where colleagues are encouraged to 'go the extra mile' will inspire and enable people to continue to deliver great new projects, both large and small which truly improve the lives of our customers. Examples of such projects include:

 The hugely successful 'Hamper Scamper' appeal, aims to buy gifts for children living within disadvantaged households. This year CBH colleagues used their contacts to encourage other local businesses, including John Lewis, P3, The Freedom Church, Christchurch and St Paul's Church, plus some very generous local people to team up with us. This meant we were able to provide **over 250 toys and gifts**, and almost **270 winter coats** for local children. We also collected **48 hampers of food and Christmas treats** for young people, families and vulnerable adults.

 Created by CBH employees, the **Help2 programme helps tenants** who find themselves in unexpected hardship or are facing exceptionally difficult circumstances; this could be as a consequence of bereavement, abuse or illness for example. Our colleagues volunteer to help out with projects, such as garden or home clearances or decorating and actively work with local partners who contribute materials and time. An annual discretionary fund is used to provide extra assistance in the shape of goods, vouchers or services to help individuals and families. **These projects make a huge difference to people**, for example a tenant suffering extreme anxiety due to historic abuse had cut themselves off from contact with the wider world. She worked three part time jobs with unsociable hours to avoid contact with people but was falling into arrears due to the financial difficulties she had been left with, and could not see a future in a home that she felt she could no longer cope with. We pitched in with home and garden clearance, decorating and money and benefit support. She fed back her thanks and one of her comments that struck a cord with the team is as follows:



For further information about the contents of this report please contact:
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great homes | *stronger communities* | *inspired people*