

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH HOMES

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

HOW WE DELIVER

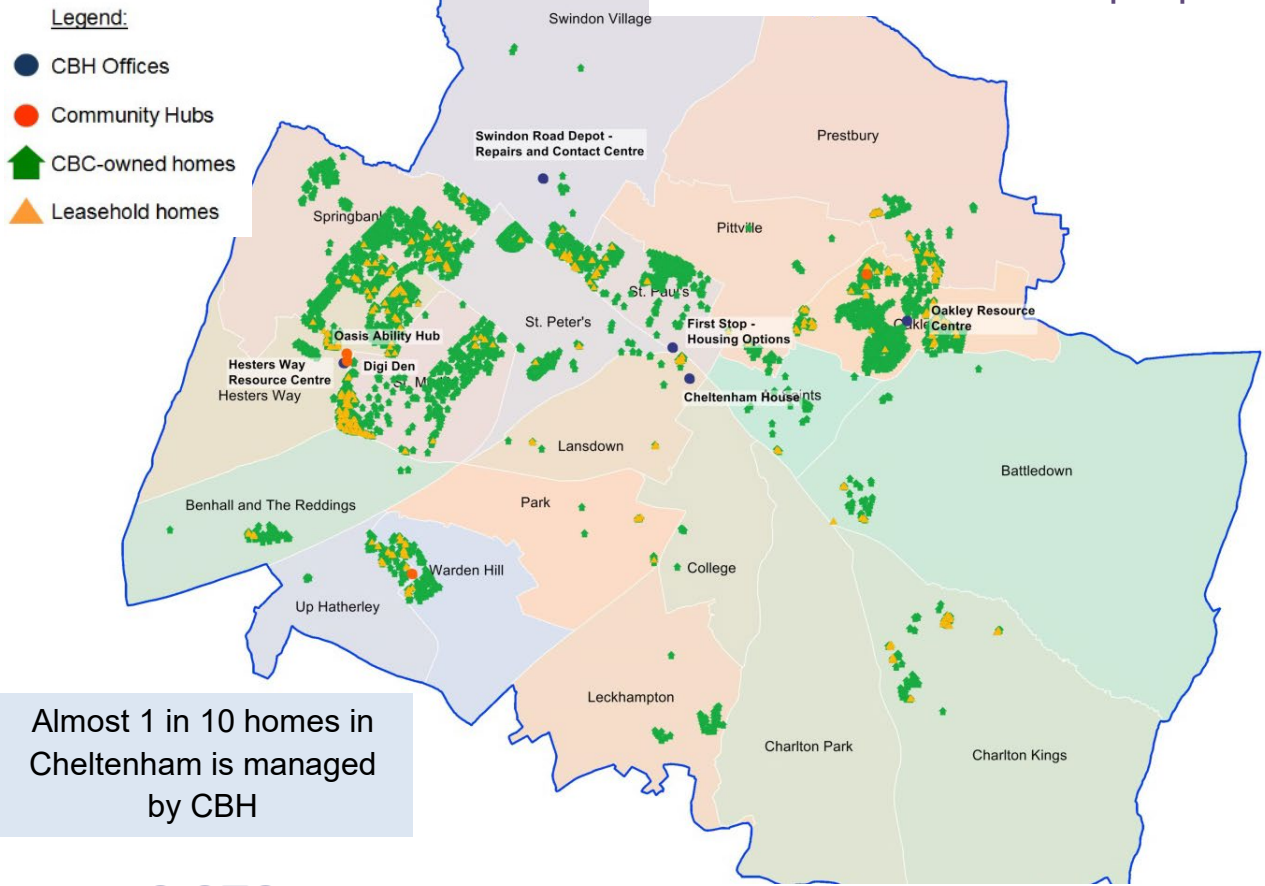


FEBRUARY 2020: APPENDIX 5



| www.cbh.org |

Distribution of CBC-owned stock and leasehold properties



3,976

CBC

OWNED HOMES

110

CBH

OWNED HOMES

27

CBC

SHARED OWNERSHIP HOMES

490

CBC OWNED HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

682

CBC

OWNED GARAGES

474

LEASEHOLD HOMES

Since CBH was set up in 2003 there have been **significant improvements** in services, tenant satisfaction and levels of engagement; **millions of pounds have been awarded** by the Government and invested into homes; new services have been developed to meet the needs of local people and are successfully delivering great outcomes that **help change lives for the better**. CBH is now working in collaboration with Cheltenham Borough Council to significantly increase the number of quality, affordable homes available to the great communities we serve in Cheltenham.

ABOUT CBH

We are Cheltenham Borough Council's (CBC's) not-for-profit housing ALMO, established to manage and maintain council-owned homes, and from 2013 manage the housing advice and homelessness service.

A 30 year Management Agreement sets out our relationship, enabling clear plans to be set for the future and continue fulfilling the aims of the CBC'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. CBH has been awarded '**One to Watch 2020**' from Best Companies. Survey results demonstrate that CBH has **good** levels of workplace engagement and shows **promising signs for the future**. We have clear plans for the future and a robust approach to achieving value for money (VFM) in the HRA. We have successfully **delivered 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 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, 'NoChildLeftBehind' and Cheltenham Lottery initiatives. We have an **excellent relationship with CBC**; it is transparent and suitably challenging; it is also highly collaborative as demonstrated by the joint commitment to invest £100m in quality homes and great communities which will **deliver up to 500 additional homes** over the next four years and enable the supply of homes in the Private Rented Sector.

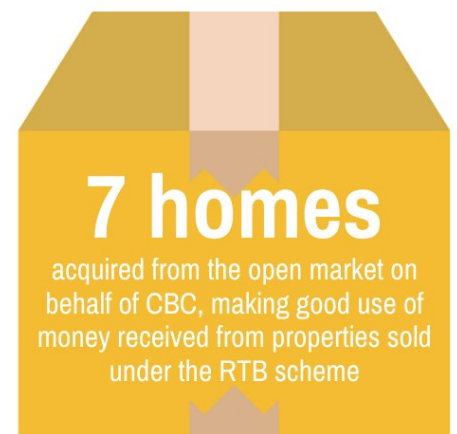
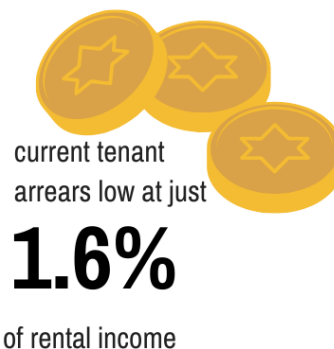
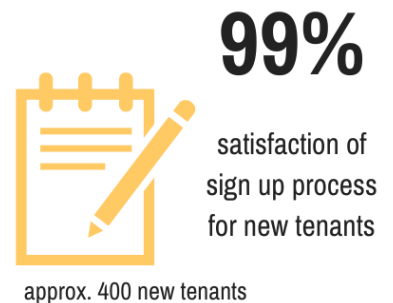
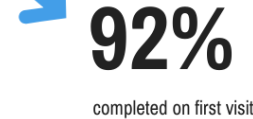
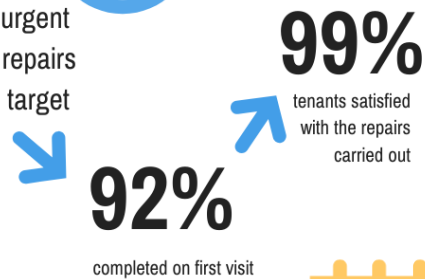
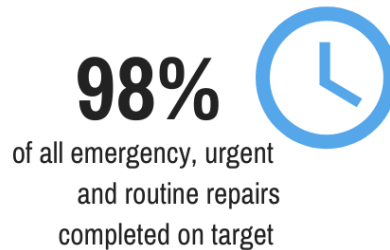
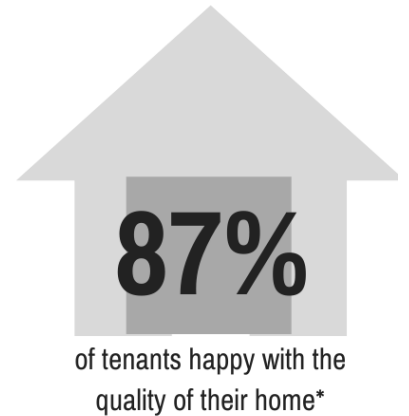
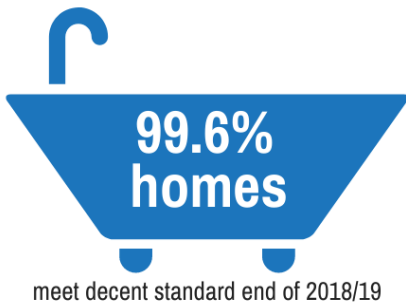
Delivering added value

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, 2018/19

Maintaining homes to a high standard & building 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 18/19.

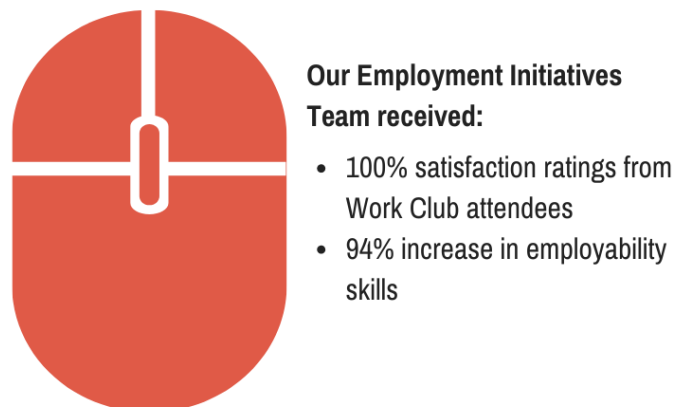
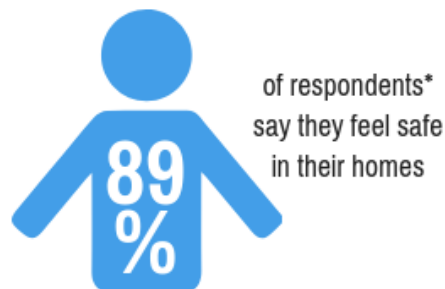


* Taken from comprehensive biennial STAR survey. Just over 1,000 tenants responded – almost 1/4 of tenancies.

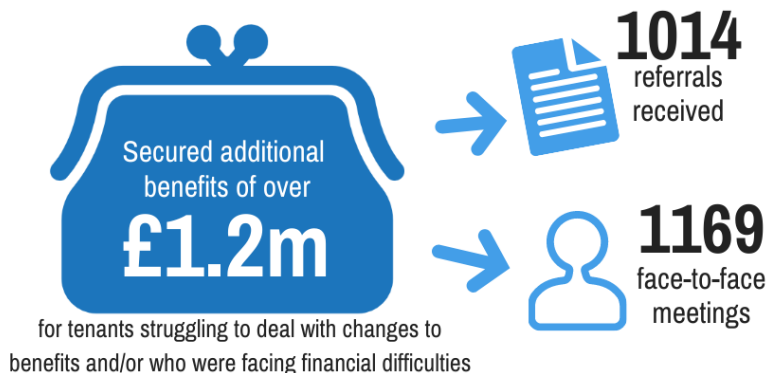
DELIVERING IN THE HRA, 2018/19

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 **£2m** in unclaimed and backdated benefits



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

DELIVERING 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**



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 colleagues to be engaged and inspired to 'go the extra mile' for our customers. We are committed to understanding how colleagues honestly feel about CBH and are always looking for opportunities to continually improve. We therefore undertook our first 'Best Companies' survey in October 2019 and were delighted to receive their '**One to Watch**' award, a special status showing that we have **promising signs for the future**. This is a great result and is testament to the hard work of CBH colleagues in delivering significant workplace improvements during the last three years of the current People Plan. The feedback provided in the survey will help to create a new People Plan, developed by CBH colleagues.

Our systems and processes have been improved as part of a major programme of work that ended in 19/20 with implementation of the main tenancy and property management system. These systems 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 are providing 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

Delivering a 'Cheltenham West Vision' regeneration project – producing 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

Delivering a 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 is being significantly expanded to help meet local housing need and balance CBC-owned stock lost to Right to Buy. Recent developments 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 building Stronger Communities by:

Supporting community projects and initiatives – through sourcing external funding and ‘in-kind’ support from our partners, procurement activities, and making best use of the resources and support provided by community organisations to increase capacity

Enhancing our role as a local community builder – to work with partners to deliver locality based community investment

Partnership working – Complimenting our direct delivery approach with benefits offered by partnership working

Reporting and monitoring our Social Value – to demonstrate the social value we deliver for our communities



We are delivering this with Inspired People by:

Developing people – using the Best Companies MC3 behavioural tool we are supporting managers and colleagues to achieve their potential through opportunities for personal and professional development. We empower colleagues to get involved in the business if 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 – using our Best Companies accreditation **One to Watch** to ensure we are attracting (and retaining) the **most talented people** who can add extra value to CBH and are committed to helping us achieve our Aims. Our range 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**, **#WeAreOneTeam**, **#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 18/19 and challenging targets to 20/21. 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	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	year-end outturn compared to target (as a RAG)	year-end target	year-end target (draft)
Direct cost per property of Major Works & Cyclical Maintenance	£1,626 (£1,820)	£2,250	£2,382
% dwellings non-decent at the end of the period	0.39%	0.35%	0.25%
% dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.90%	100%	100%
Average SAP rating (2009 methodology)	72.02	72.2	72.4
Biennial STAR Survey: satisfaction with overall quality of the home	87.2%	90%	90%
Direct cost per property of Responsive Repairs & Void Works	£636 (£581)	£580	£665
% of Emergency, Urgent and Routine repairs completed on target	98.28%	99%	99%
% tenants satisfied with repairs carried out	99.14%	99%	99%
Direct cost per property of Rent Arrears and Collection	£89 (£90)	£93	£97
Current arrears as % of rental income (excluding court costs)	1.62%	2.65%	2.8%
Rent collected from current & former tenants as % rent due	98.95%	97%	98%
Direct cost per property of Lettings	£39 (£42)	£42	£50
% Rent lost through CBC dwellings becoming vacant	0.79%	0.73%	0.73%
Average time taken to re-let minor void CBC properties in days	20.60	19	19
Complaints closed at stage 1 - % within agreed timescales	95.45%	96%	100%
Number of complaints per 1000 properties	9.05	10	10
Contact centre calls answered within 60 seconds	New for 2019-20	90%	90%
Number of additional homes supplied	18	50	100

Major works and Cyclical Maintenance

CBH maintains appropriate capital investment in our stock, based on up to date data sourced from our stock surveys: 97% of properties have had stock condition data updated in the past 5 years. Our multi-million pound replacement windows and doors programme is ahead of target at the end of the year, helping to reduce energy use in homes and make them more secure. This has been achieved as a consequence of excellent contract management and working relationships with our contractors.

This CPP is slightly worse than the average within our peer group although this is affected by the health of others' capital programmes. Local Authority (LA) owned stock requires greater investment than housing sector stock as it is recognised as being generally older.

Performance remains strong across KPIs. Gas servicing remains high, with a robust approach taken to ensure access through legal means where this is necessary. In some instances, this requires a joined-up approach with other local agencies to support those tenants who have been resistant to volunteering access due to mental health issues. SAP figures, which provide an environmental assessment, have increased as a consequence of planned, appropriate investment and satisfaction with the quality of the home remains high and compares well with the sector, placing CBH in the upper middle quartile.

Challenging targets for 2019/20 maintain a clear direction of travel. The change in Direct CPP of Major Works & Cyclical Maintenance reflects the increase in some aspects of major work (e.g. showers) and significant investment in non-traditional properties. The target of 0.35% for the percentage of dwellings non-decent at the end of the period takes into account a small number of Cornish and prefabricated properties that are not due decent homes work as they remain subject to option appraisal. Sufficient responsive repairs will still be undertaken.

Responsive repairs and void works

The responsive repairs service is a flagship service for tenants that delivers, emergency, urgent and more routine responsive repairs. Our successful 'sustaining successful tenancies' project, which involved visiting each tenancy over the year generated some fantastic outcomes and support for tenants. It also generated a higher than normal number of repairs which has affected the year-end repairs KPI. CPP is better than expected and when compared to our peer group is slightly lower than the average CPP. Satisfaction levels with our repairs service is very high, positioning CBH in the top quartile for the sector.



Our responsive repairs service is very important to and highly regarded by tenants: almost 10,500 repairs were delivered during 2018/19, with satisfaction levels running at 99%

Rent Arrears and Collection

We have proactively resourced the housing revenues team to deal with the continuation of the challenges faced by both tenants and the business following the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) across Cheltenham. This has been carefully modelled and has enabled strong rent collection and arrears performance in this area, with current arrears levels consistently demonstrating top quartile performance. The CPP for Rent Arrears and Collection for 2018/19 is better than the figure that was modelled during the annual budget setting process and when compared with the peer group slightly worse than the sector average. Future targets reflect the local challenges to be faced as the roll out of Universal Credit increases across the town.

Lettings

A higher than normal number of voids and 'difficult-to-let' properties contributed to rent loss from voids and re-let times that were higher than expected, the latter of which was also impacted by a new 'downsizing project'. This project is aimed at making best use of homes and helping people who want to move to a smaller property, do so. In 2018/19 it successfully helped 30 households with three or more bedrooms to 'downsize' into more appropriately sized homes, freeing up larger properties for those people more in need. Re-let time, although off target still demonstrates above average performance compared with our benchmarking peer group. CPP for the delivery of our Lettings service is better than the target set. When compared with the peer group it is in line with the sector average. This area maintains strong performance, with void re-let times and low rent loss. Future targets seek to maintain those levels whilst reflecting the local challenges to be faced.

Complaints and contact centre

Complaints performance is strong although slightly off target, reflecting the ease with which customers can make complaints and the effectiveness of the processes dealing with them. Work to enhance customer contact and related telephony systems was successfully completed towards the end of 2018/19 and this has seen a significant upturn in performance. A new tenant-approved performance indicator to measure the number of calls answered within 60 seconds will prioritise and focus efforts in this area over the coming years to drive up performance and satisfaction levels.

Number of Additional Homes Supplied

We supplied 18 additional homes including both new build homes and acquisitions, making great use of capital receipts from homes sold under right to buy rules. Future targets are increasing, reflecting the potential for increased numbers as a consequence of more freedom within the HRA and the £100m loan facility agreed with CBC.



Building Stronger Communities

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	year-end outturn compared to target (as a RAG)	year-end target	year-end target (draft)
Direct cost per property of ASB	£54 (£55)	£58	£60
% closed ASB cases that were resolved	100%	99%	99%
% satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with	100%	98%	98%
Biennial STAR Survey: tenants feeling safe in their homes	89%	95%	95%
Direct cost per property of Resident Involvement	£40 (£75)	£35	£37
Biennial STAR Survey: customers satisfied that CBH listens to their views and acts upon them	65.8%	75%	80%
Direct cost per property of Tenancy Management	£83 (£93)	£111	£103
Biennial STAR Survey: overall customer satisfaction	88.2%	90%	90%
Biennial STAR Survey: satisfaction with value for money of the rent	87.5%	88%	88%
Income generated on behalf of customers year to date	£1,217,200	£1,000,000	£1,000,000
Direct cost per property of Community Investment	£102	£111	£114

ASB

Our ASB work is important in helping tenants and communities feel safer. We work very closely with local Police and other agencies, and through proactive and preventative approaches with individuals and local communities. CPP for the delivery of our ASB service is better than the target set for 2018/19. When compared with our peer group this CPP is higher than the average but this area demonstrates strong performance and satisfaction, and future targets seek to maintain those levels. A new question asked of tenants as part of the biennial STAR survey shows that 89% of respondents felt safe in their homes. This question will be part of a quarterly survey of tenants from 2019/20 onwards that will provide 'live' information to be used to shape services and respond even quicker to tenants' needs

Resident Involvement

Regular reviews of our use of the benchmarking tool are carried out to ensure current ways of working are accurately reflected. Following such a review we have made changes that have resulted in the Direct CPP for Resident Involvement being lower than expected but does provide a new opportunity to consider the CPP for community investment activities. When compared with the peer group CPP for Resident Involvement is slightly more than the average for our peer group. This reflects our desire to invest appropriately to involve our tenants and leaseholders to ensure CBH meets their needs. To ensure further involvement for residents, we contact them after the surveys to establish how we can best respond to their feedback. The CPP for community investment enables CBH to improve the life chances of our tenants and reduce the stigma associated with social housing.



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

Tenancy Management

Direct Tenancy Management CPP is lower than the expected level, this is following a review of structures, roles and processes and a recognition of time spent on community investment activities. When compared with the sector this CPP is slightly higher than the average for our peer group. 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 others' outturn positions CBH in the upper middle quartile. 87.5% of tenants consider that the rent they pay provides Value for Money and, although just below the target set, this is a high level of satisfaction and compares well with others; again, placing CBH in the upper middle quartile. These questions are part of a quarterly survey of tenants that provides 'live' information to be used to better shape and improve services.



Inspired People	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	year-end outturn compared to target (as a RAG) where available	year-end target	year-end target (draft)
Average number of working days lost to total sickness	5.62	7	7
Percentage of staff satisfied with your organisation as an employer	95.80%	Superseded by Best Companies	Superseded by Best Companies
% of colleagues feeling they are developing at CBH	88%	Superseded by Best Companies	Superseded by Best Companies
% of colleagues inspired to go the extra mile	85%	Superseded by Best Companies	Superseded by Best Companies

Employees

Our ongoing People Plan, which was developed with our colleagues, has helped to increase employee satisfaction with CBH as an employer. It has enhanced policies, procedures and introduced employee-led initiatives that have made people feel more valued and the business a better place to work. The People Plan

aims to make CBH a great place to work and to create an environment where people feel supported and empowered to make things happen for both colleagues and customers alike.

Future targets and our new People Plan will reflect our desire to focus on colleague engagement. An engaged workforce is more motivated and productive as colleagues feel connected with each other and the aims of CBH. Also, by 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:



-  This year we expanded our own life changing **Help2 scheme** to develop a Christmas appeal that is more in line with the needs of our tenants and their families. This year CBH colleagues used their contacts to encourage other local businesses plus some very generous local people to team up with and help us deliver two big Christmas fayres for CBH Tenants as well as our usual food hamper delivery. Our connections with local partners also helped us to launch a special campaign to #keepcheltwarm to help keep vulnerable adults and children warm during Winter through the donations of over 750 coats. This meant we were able provide **over 130 toys and gifts** for local children and **59 hampers of food and Christmas treats** for our vulnerable tenants and their families.
-  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 was going through a difficult time trying to deal with suicidal thoughts and financial difficulties. Things continued to go downhill as they were struggling to look after themselves. With support from CBH and other local organisations, the tenant has been able to access training, secure a full-time job, stop smoking and now has a weekly plan set up so that they are able to pay off their arrears.

A tenant helped through the Help2 project said:



Absolutely wouldn't have got through things without the support of CBH - financially or emotionally. I had some very low times and bad thoughts



-  Our Employment Initiatives Service set up the **Thrive** scheme to offer young people at risk of exclusion the opportunity to complete an ASDAN certificate in Careers and Experiencing Work, as well as work placements with CBH and some of our contractors. The scheme was recognised by Travis Perkins at the **My Community Awards**, winning the Employment and Community Skills category and a £5,000 cheque. The amazing achievement was only made possible thanks to CBH colleagues and partners who helped to deliver the life changing programme.
-  Thrive was also nominated for Cheltenham Borough Council's **No Child Left Behind** awards, along with the #KeepCheltWarm campaign, CBH's ACEs pilot in St. Paul's and the Youth Mentor scheme developed by CBH's Community Investment Team. CBH was delighted to have been shortlisted, and even more pleased to win in three of the four categories – recognising the above and beyond approach to so much of what our colleagues do, but also the close working relationships with partners in our communities.



For further information about the contents of this report please contact:
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