

Putting the HEART into housing

How we
spend
our rental
income

Service
plan
2014-2015

How are we
performing?

Achieving value
for money

Annual Report
for Tenants and
Leaseholders 2014



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Introduction

Welcome to this year's Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders which tells you how we are performing and what we have achieved throughout the financial year 2013/14.

It is our aim to be the best housing service; by providing good quality accessible housing across all tenures. We are always looking for new and innovative ways to improve the services we provide to you.

As Housing Portfolio Holder I am always proud of the work undertaken by the housing team. In particular this year, the Housing Options and Homelessness teams have made significant reductions on the use of bed & breakfast as temporary accommodation and I look forward to seeing the new hostel scheme at Waterbeach open its doors early in 2015.

I am also delighted with the progress made this year on the warm homes programme – seeing the installation of over 2,000 homes with solar panels, the implementation of new technologies in heating, as well as external wall and loft insulation. This will mean many tenants will have warmer homes and lower energy bills this winter and for years to come.

We have also strengthened the Housing Management Service, so that we have a dedicated officer working on tenancy fraud and a specialist team dealing with anti social behaviour.

Finally, I must thank the hard work of the Tenant Scrutiny Review Team who undertook their first scrutiny project this year; looking at the grounds maintenance service. This was a huge piece of work, resulting in recommendations for improvement as we work towards letting the new grounds maintenance contract in early 2015. I look forward to working with the Scrutiny Group over the coming year as they scrutinise the Sheltered Housing service, and our voids & lettings performance under the “new tenant experience”.



Cllr Mark Howell
Portfolio Holder for Housing

As Housing Director, I would also like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who has taken the time to contribute to the success of the housing service this year.

We continue to provide a high quality service that offers good value for money, ensuring that we do the right things for our tenants.

Our rent collection is within the top ten across all councils in the country and we have also done well reletting vacant properties, taking an average of 16 days, which makes us second from top in comparison with other local authorities in the country. However, we acknowledge that we need to do better with our repairs service and we are working with Mears, our contractors, to improve this for 2015.

We have also embarked on a rolling programme of satisfaction surveys to help us identify areas for improvement and I am pleased to say that overall satisfaction levels in the first area we surveyed have increased by 10% since 2012. We will be surveying more tenants in 2015, so please do take the time to complete.

I hope you find the Annual Report informative. If you have any comments or feedback you wish to make, please contact Housing Services (contact details can be found at the end of the report).



Stephen Hills
Director of Housing

Your Housing Team

There's been a lot of change within the housing department over the last year; we've bid farewell to some long-serving colleagues, welcomed new faces to the team and seen some new posts added to help improve the service we provide.

Asset Management, Planned Maintenance, Responsive Repairs and Warm Homes

- Manage the responsive repairs contract with Mears
- Survey void properties and get them ready for re-letting
- Manage the cyclical and planned maintenance programmes (such as kitchen replacements etc.)
- Manage the heating contracts, lead on the installation of External Wall Insulation, improving the energy efficiency of our properties
- Manage the installation of aids and adaptations
- Manage SCDC land

Housing Services

- A team of Housing Services Officers manage our properties across the district
- This includes the letting of homes, mutual exchanges, changes to tenancies and dealing with any tenancy issues
- A Neighbourhood Support Team that deal with disputes and anti-social behaviour
- The Gypsy and Travellers team manage the two sites within the district
- A Tenancy Fraud Officer has also recently been appointed
- Manage Right to Buy applications

Housing Advice and Options

- Process and manage Home-Link applications (including helping people to bid for properties)
- Manage the allocation of properties
- Provide housing advice to help prevent homelessness by working with partners and offering other alternative housing options
- Assess homeless applications and provide temporary accommodation where required

Rent and Recovery

- Manage the payments/non-payments of rents, service charges, garage rents and associated costs

Housing Development and Enabling

- Write housing strategies and policies (including tenancy agreements etc.)
- Performance management and data quality - including complaints, compliments and Freedom of Information requests
- Resident involvement, including the organising of tenant events, newsletters & Tenant Participation Group meetings
- Approving grants for disabled adaptations for those not living in Council properties
- Affordable homes development (working with partners to build affordable housing around the district, as well as embarking upon our own Council house building programme)

Supported Housing

- 13 sheltered estate officers, 7 visiting support officers, 2 team leaders, 2 office based staff, 1 Lifeline+ officer, 2 community telecare co-ordinators and a team leader
- Look after our sheltered homes and schemes across the district and our Lifeline and new Lifeline+ services



Doing the right things for our tenants is our interpretation on value for money

Obviously cost and efficiency are important elements to ensure we get the most from our money but we believe that the true value is what makes a difference to you, this is often known as the 'social value'.

We have recently begun a rolling programme of tenant surveys to help us understand what is important to you and where we can improve. The Resident Involvement team have been working hard over the last year to set up a tenant scrutiny panel to inspect the work we do, with their first project looking at the grounds maintenance contract. This work has meant some intensive training for tenants, with some becoming tenant inspectors to assess the work being carried out on the ground. The team are also busy recruiting tenants to act as 'village voices' so that you have a local representative who can support you with any housing queries.

Good quality housing

Through our Business Plan and 5 year housing maintenance plan we will ensure all our council homes, as a minimum, meet the decent homes standard.

Enhancing residents' quality of life

By ensuring everything we do provides social value to residents. Either through social & economical benefits, service quality, environmental benefits or financial benefits. Key projects in our service plan are assessed against these criteria.

Housing across all tenures, accessible to all

We will provide additional housing of all tenures as part of the Council's new build programme and through the housing company, Ermine Street Housing.

Health and well being

Helping people to live independently in their own homes through enhanced support services for older people and the disabled and supporting tenants through the impacts of the welfare reform, such as changes to benefits.

'Doing the right things...'

By listening and understanding what our residents want we can target services appropriately, as well as ensuring that everything we do meets our purpose as a housing provider.

Supporting economic growth

Through the provision of good quality housing that is affordable to a diverse workforce.

Social opportunities

Increasing financial and digital inclusion through the 'Community Impact Statement'.

Improved energy security & reducing carbon footprints

Through the 'Warm Homes Strategy', providing tenants with energy efficiency solutions, such as solar panels and air source heat pumps.

Tenant Scrutiny

Making sure we are doing the right things and that every pound is well spent - and our customers agree.

Putting the value back into housing:

When it comes to social value, the Council means business. With senior level buy-in, the Council is now on a mission to ensure that we monitor, measure and evaluate the impacts of social value.

For example, in one repairs contract, 'better community relations' involves the contractor providing free labour to community projects, whilst 'opportunity for innovation' involves a vehicle tracking system which improves response times and lowers environmental impact.

All our key projects identified in the service plan (see pages 6-7) are measured against the social value so that we can be sure that what we do has a benefit to you. The chart to the right demonstrates the overall social value anticipated to be delivered through our projects.

Over the last year we have given a great deal of thought around the processes that ensure we are getting value for money which includes...

- working towards our strategic vision
- our performance
- financial management
- how we make decisions and scrutinise these

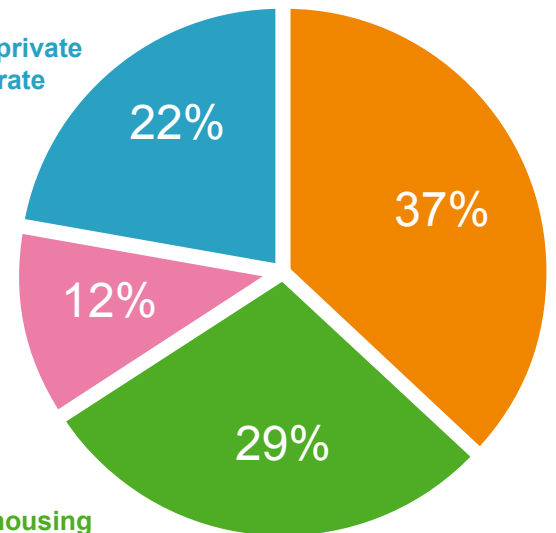
For further information, please visit www.scambs.gov.uk

e.g. improving IT skills and access to the internet as part of the Community Impact Strategy

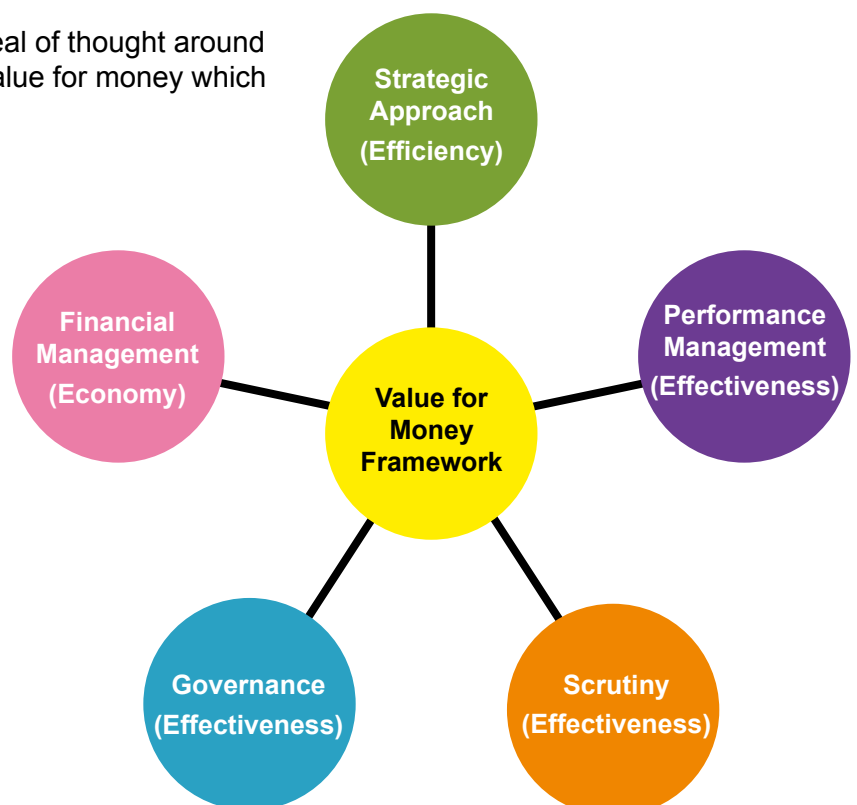
e.g. Providing good quality private rented homes that will generate money for the Council

e.g. Improving the energy efficiency of our homes

e.g. Making sure the housing advice and options service is of the highest standards compared to other Councils



- Social & Economic Benefits
- Service Quality
- Environmental Benefits
- Financial Benefits

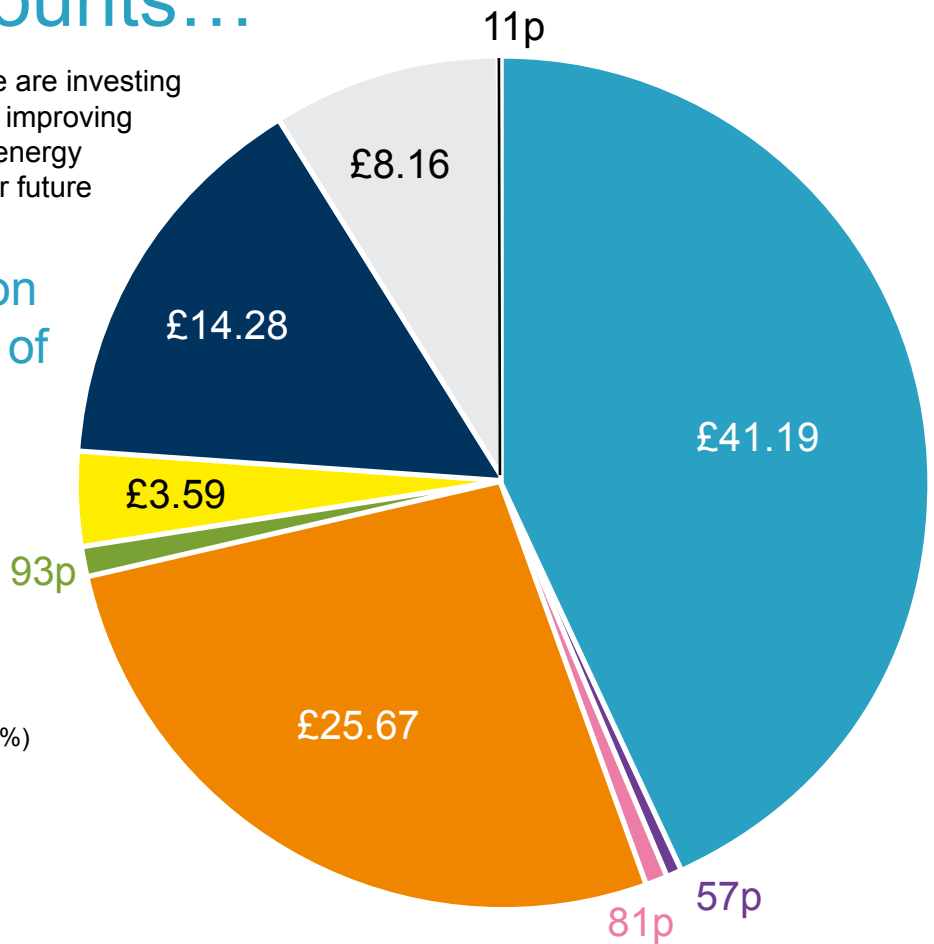


Every penny counts...

For every penny you spend on rent, we are investing it back into our housing, either through improving existing homes by making them more energy efficient, or by providing new homes for future tenants.

The pie chart is based on an average weekly rent of £95.31.

- Repairs and Improvements (43.22%)
- Outdoor Maintenance (0.6%)
- Supported Housing (0.85%)
- Loan Payment (26.94%)
- Resident Involvement (0.98%)
- New Affordable Housing Provision (3.76%)
- Investment and Reserves (14.98%)
- General Management Costs (8.56%)
- Other (net) (0.11%)



How our funding has changed...

Back in 2011-2012 we were required to give 53.2% of all the rents we collected from you directly back to Central Government; this was called the 'Negative Subsidy' scheme.

The Government changed the law in 2012-2013 to allow councils to keep the rent that they collect. This was achieved by the Councils being required to effectively buy themselves out of the old 'Negative Subsidy' system. The cost of this was based on a formula that applied across the board. In our case, the loan required was £205 million. This was borrowed at a low, fixed rate of interest over thirty years.

- 2011-2012** Under the old system we paid out 53.2% of all rents collected, totalling £12,526,981.
- 2012-2013** Our loan interest payment was 28.3% of all rents collected, totalling £7,192,805 (fixed rate).
- 2013-2014** Our loan interest payment was 26.94% of all rents collected, totalling £7,192,805 (fixed rate).

£26.7million
our total rental income

£11.5million
spent on repairs and improvements

Some facts and some things that we have done with the money...

- £1.44million - spent on kitchen/bathroom refurbishments
- £2.20million - spent on new and replacement heating systems
- £1.64million - spent on energy conservation
- £2.54million - spent on responsive repairs

5,307
council homes

111
leasehold properties

343
equity share properties

4
new council
homes built

25
properties
re-roofed

59
whole house
window
replacements

1,659
applicants on the
housing register (as
at 1st April 2014)

101
new bathrooms
installed

481
replacement
boilers

40
mutual
exchanges

28.5%
increase on housing
applications

292
SCDC homes
re-let

39
vacant dwellings (as
at 1st April 2014)

536
homes let through Home-
Link (includes the 292
council lets and Housing
Association lets)

158
new
affordable
homes built

98.1%
of calls to Mears
24-7 answered

95.5%
customers satisfaction
with repairs

£678,498
spent of disabled
adaptions

94
complaints
received

1.27%
level of rent arrears

153
new kitchens
installed

47
air-source heat
pumps installed

28
homes sold under
'right to buy'

0
overdue gas
services

Service Plan (2014/2015)

Each year we produce our 'Affordable Homes Service Plan', which sets out our key objectives for the year. Here we have outlined some of the aims that form the projects included in the 2014/ 2015 service plan.

Housing Company

AIM: To deliver the pilot scheme to establish a housing company. This will look to address the housing need for private sector rental accommodation within the district, which is well managed, of good quality and energy efficient.

Non-Traditional Homes (properties of a non-traditional construction, e.g. system built or steel construction)

AIM: To put in place a strategy to improve the condition of our non-traditional homes. The programme will include energy efficiency measures to benefit the environment.



Gypsy & Traveller Site Improvement

AIM: To improve and increase Gypsy & Traveller provision in the District, as per Central Government legislation. This will include site improvement and the provision of two additional pitches.

Estate Inspections

AIM: To implement a programme of estate inspections, including reviewing the need for a welfare garden scheme. The project will involve tenants to help enhance their communities.

Robinson Court, Gamlingay

AIM: To demolish a bedsit scheme and provide better quality accommodation. The current properties are no longer fit for purpose and have high management costs. This redevelopment will provide improved quality family homes, that are more energy efficient and contribute to a more balanced community.

“South
Cambridgeshire
will continue to
be the best place
to live, work
and study in the
country.”



Review of the Repairs Contract

AIM: To undertake a mid-term review of our partnering repairs contract with Mears and, crucially, establish whether to extend it. We will consult with both tenants and staff during this period to assess how the contract provides value for money, customer satisfaction and how it compares to other Councils and internal performance indicators.

Development of New Older Persons Services

AIM: To implement a new visiting support contract for older people and explore the potential for additional services. This will look to provide support to those living in private homes, as well as our Council properties such as helping with providing greater support to all residents and hopeful financial benefits to residents by signposting those affected by fuel poverty or may benefit from budgetary/money advice.

Wilford Furlong, Willingham

AIM: To identify options to help improve the overall environment of Wilford Furlong, in consultation with residents, local members and the parish council. This will look to improve homes on the estate, create higher satisfaction levels with existing tenants and some potential for increased housing.

Disabled Adaptations in HRA Stock

AIM: To review the service provided in relation to disabled adaptations in our Council stock. This will ensure we have the right processes in place to provide a targeted service that will enable tenants to live independently in their homes through the provision of disabled adaptations. Through this we want to achieve improved customer satisfaction, a quicker service and value for money.

Community Impact Statement

AIM: To assess the wider impact of housing services in the community, including digital and financial inclusion. This will look to provide social and economic benefits to residents through digital/financial inclusion - helping more people to be connected to the internet so that they are able to complete forms online, access services (such as online banking etc.) and finding the best deals.



Updates from last year...

You'll have just read some of our projects and plans for this year on the previous pages, and we thought it would be a good opportunity to update you on some of the projects, previously known as 'Local Offers', that we outlined in last year's Annual Report.

Housing Company

As you will have already seen, this project is currently on-going. Huge strides have been taken since its initial inception back in 2013 and so far the housing company has taken on twenty-seven homes (on lease). The 'What's New?' section of this report contains more information about the venture.

This service is still currently in discussion, looking at the options on the types of services we can offer. This is likely to initially be available for tenants and leaseholders over 60 years and for anyone with a disability, but with a view to branching out into the private sector in the future. The handyperson service will be able to help with small jobs such as putting up curtain rails and shelves etc. for a small fee. Any proposed pricing will be presented and discussed as part of the relevant forums. More of an update should be available soon.

Handyperson Service

Increase involvement in all aspects of the service - Roll out tenant led scrutiny with recruitment and the next two scrutiny projects

There have been recruitment events and over twenty training sessions for tenant/leaseholder scrutiny volunteers since this local offer was outlined last year. The Grounds Maintenance Contract was selected as the initial pilot for scrutiny and the Tenant Scrutiny Review Team (SRT) spent around six months looking in detail at the contract - including interviews, surveys and inspections. On 17th June 2014 the SRT report, entitled 'Grass Roots', was published. Both the report & council response are available to view on our website (www.scambs.gov.uk/content/newtenant-scrutiny-review-team) and three quarters of the SRT recommendations have been agreed. The next scrutiny project has recently been announced, looking at the Sheltered Housing Service and vacant properties and lettings performance.

We now have two warm homes surveyors on board who are in place to help with our programme of installing external wall & loft insulation and to help with identifying and tackling fuel poverty. We are installing air source heat pumps (ASHP) and Quantum Heaters (a new type of electric storage heater) where possible and have installed over 2,000 solar PV panels. We also are beginning work on a programme for our non-traditional properties (see previous pages) to help improve the condition, quality and energy efficiency of them. In addition to this, we are also looking at 'switching' opportunities to help tenants reduce their electric/gas bills.

Improve the sustainability of our housing stock/ communities making them more energy efficient & address fuel poverty

Temporary Accommodation

We currently have around thirty-five properties that are available for use as temporary accommodation, and have also recently sanctioned the allocation of some of our properties (on lease) to cover the shortfall of homeless accommodation, whilst the hostel in Waterbeach is re-built. Building work is progressing on the hostel re-development and this should be ready for use after 31st March 2015. This will provide thirty units of self contained accommodation for households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Council has also made significant progress in reducing its expenditure on Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation for homeless households. In 2012-2013, the monthly expenditure on B&B averaged around £8,000 per month but in 2013 - 2014 this figure was reduced to an average of about £2,000 per month. Early indications for 2014-2015 suggest that B&B expenditure is continuing to reduce. This has been achieved by increasing the amount of temporary accommodation that is available and through the continued emphasis on homeless prevention.

Our aim is to reduce fraudulent use of our properties, to ensure that they are available to those who need them most. We have had a dedicated officer in post since March 2014 and it has proven to be very successful, with around fifty cases currently open & several tenancies voluntarily surrendered after interview. We are currently collaborating with other local areas and are checking applicant's details more thoroughly. The Government estimates that the cost saving figure to the Council, per property that is brought back into use is £18,000. We are working with a consortium of local partners to secure additional funding to help support work in this area.

Tenancy Fraud and Prevention

Improve the way we carry our repairs - Getting it right, first time

Getting repairs right first time can provide cost savings, positive customer satisfaction and could enable other repairs to be attended to sooner. Our aim by April 2014 was to achieve a higher level of customer satisfaction and reduce the level of missed appointments. We have been working closely with Mears, our repairs contractor, to try and improve on this. Mears are continuing to review their van stock, to ensure that the items they have on board reflect the most commonly required items - which they identify through the monitoring of equipment and stock. This helps Mears to complete the jobs first time.

As part of the Scrutiny Review, Grounds Maintenance team (SRT), we recruited and trained over fifteen tenant inspectors. They have carried out inspections of more than twenty areas as part of the SRT review and are now working directly with the housing team for grounds and estate inspections. The programme of training and recruitment is planned to continue year on year.

Monitoring the ground maintenance contract with tenants

Mobile Working

South Cambs surveyors are now equipped with a system that allows them to take their desk out on the road.

With the vast and fast advancements in technology, there are a whole host of ways for our team to be more productive and proactive when it comes to getting their work done. Previously, staff that spent the majority of their time out on the district would often have administrative duties to catch up on when next in the office - in addition to the day to day management of their e-mail inboxes. Thanks to the new hand held tablets, our surveying team are now able to carry out much of these tasks on the go.

Repairs and other works can be specified whilst out on site (including the raising and sending of the job request to a contractor), quality of works inspections can be completed and authorised whilst in attendance and communication with the office is also improved. The tablets also have GPS capabilities which can help with lone working arrangements, which can help keep staff safer.

Officers can write and receive e-mails too - meaning that if they are out on the district and notice an issue that relates to a different Council department, they can easily contact the relevant person there and then. This should help improve efficiency and reduce delays. The lightweight tablet is fully secure (no data can be lost or stolen) and there are no unnecessary apps or games on the device.

There are plans for this system to be rolled out to other sections within the housing department in the near future, as they are proving to be an excellent item to enable better working flexibility.



Hub Offices

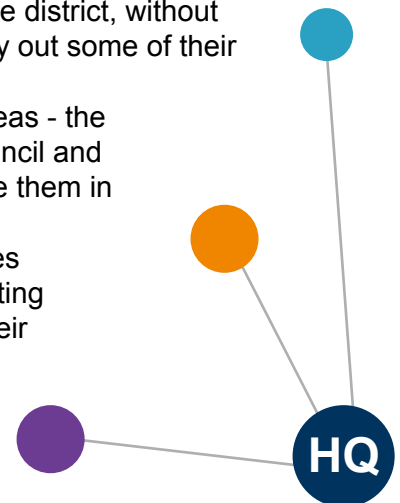
In addition to the working flexibility that some staff members are enjoying with the mobile devices, three new hub offices are currently being set up in Over, Great Shelford and Meldreth respectively.

These have been designed to give staff the flexibility to work across the district, without the need to travel all the way to South Cambs Hall in Cambourne, to carry out some of their core duties (such as e-mails etc.).

It's not just the housing department that will benefit from these new areas - the offices will be available to staff across South Cambridgeshire District Council and there are hopes that other public services may also have the ability to use them in the future.

The new offices are located within communal areas of the three villages and will boast a full range of facilities, including wireless access and meeting rooms. Users will have access to the same features as they do behind their normal office desks.

The spaces at Over and Great Shelford will be able to accommodate between ten and fifteen members of staff at any one time and the area at Meldreth will have around five desks available for people to use. The opening of these is anticipated to be in early 2015.



New Community Lifeline+ Service

The Council's 'Community Lifeline Service' has been running for around ten years now and has over one thousand users. Customers have help and support available to them through the press of a button 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. The pendant alarm button contacts a response centre, who are trained to assess the situation and arrange for a key holder, next of kin or the emergency services to attend.

Community Lifeline+ is a brand new service that builds upon the existing Lifeline scheme and offers a variety of additional services that aims to help people retain their independence. Services on offer include regular phone calls, scheduled home visits, picking up emergency shopping and arranging community transport.

The Lifeline+ service is designed to be as flexible as possible to meet people's needs. For example, if a close relative is going on holiday, a flexible booking can be made so that the user will receive a visit or a phone call from a friendly member of staff whilst they are away. This can offer peace of mind and reassurance to families during this time.

Lifeline+ charges range from £4.34 to £6.70 per week and the service is available across the South Cambridgeshire district. For more information about Lifeline or Lifeline+, please contact us on 03450 450 500.



Ermine Street Housing (the new housing company)

Ermine Street Housing is a property management company that aims to provide high quality housing at a competitive price, with no hidden costs.

It is independent of the Council and operates within the private sector; however it is wholly owned by us. Ermine Street Housing purchases homes on the open market and then rents/ sells them - creating an innovative way of generating a revenue stream for the Council to protect valuable services.

Councillors have already agreed a seven million pound investment and have recently decided upon a revised financial model to ensure that the company can repay the debt and make a profit - with the surpluses being passed to the Council.



For more information please visit www.erminestreethousing.co.uk

Our performance at a glance

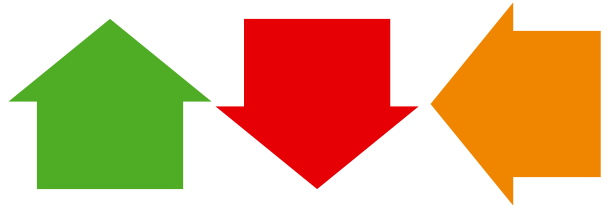
In this section we have taken our year end performance figures for 2013-2014 and compared them against the targets that we had previously set out.

Reflecting on what we have done well, or not so well, is an integral part of ensuring that we provide a good quality housing service. In order to better the way we work we must review and take note of both our statistics and the feedback that you provide us. The figures show that there is some room for improvement with meeting our repair targets, which we will continue to work with our partnering repairs contractor, Mears, over the next year to ensure these are improved. We are also currently reviewing the repairs contract this year, to assess the possibility of extending it beyond its timeframe, or if we need to consider a new procurement exercise. Whilst the other areas may be satisfactory, we are committed to not being complacent with our performance, and will continue to work hard and continuously improve.

The 'achieved' figures are taken from the year end statistics, as at 31 March 2014.

What Do The Performance Arrows Mean?

The green arrow is used when we feel that we have either achieved or managed to exceed the targets that we had set ourselves. The orange arrow is shown when we feel that there is room for improvement, however we are performing close to target. The red arrow is displayed when our achieved figure is less than the target.



Housemark

Along with more than 950 housing organisations, we are members of Housemark - which aims to help the social housing sector improve performance and achieve value for money. Housemark enables us to enter our performance data, costs, resources etc. and benchmark (compare) our level of service with other social landlords - whether it be nationally, regionally, other rural local authorities etc. This helps us analyse how we are performing against other authorities/organisations. For example, benchmarking highlights that our level of current rent arrears is low, actually placing us first out of the other eastern region housing organisations. However, our routine repairs completed within 20 days are much lower, placing us 23rd out of the eastern region.

Repairs

Emergency repairs attended to within 24 hours

Target - 98%

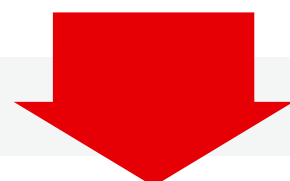
Achieved - 96.09%



Urgent repairs completed within five days

Target - 95%

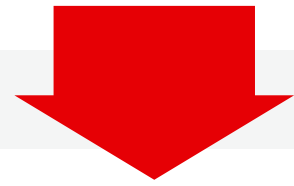
Achieved - 90.95%



Our Performance

Routine repairs completed within twenty days

Target - 95%
Achieved - 90.70%



Average time taken to complete a repair

Target - 12 days
Achieved - 10 days



Percentage of repairs completed at the first visit

Target - 85%
Achieved - 90.21%



Customer satisfaction with repairs

Target - 95%
Achieved - 95.50%



Homes

Number of overdue gas services

Target - 0
Achieved - 0



Level of current rent arrears

Target - 1.4%
Achieved - 1.27%



Rent lost through empty dwellings

Target - 4%
Achieved - 0.97%



Average time to re-let a general needs property (with minor repairs)

Target 20 days
Achieved 18 days



SAP Rating (Calculation for assessing energy and environmental performance)

Target - 65
Achieved - 73



Complaints

Last year saw the appointment of our Data Quality Officer, whose role includes monitoring and coordinating performance. In last year's Annual Report we outlined that we were anticipating an increase in the volume of complaints that we received, due to our enhanced monitoring. This was indeed correct, and in 2013-2014 we saw an increase of 27% compared to 2012-2013; as detailed in the table to the right.

Our in-depth monitoring of housing complaints has meant that we can now gain a better understanding and produce more statistics on the types of complaints we are receiving. For example, we can now monitor how the complaints are being logged (whether it be through a letter or e-mail), see the overall percentage of complaints that relate to each particular housing service and categorise all the complaints to identify the most common issues that need to be addressed.

For 2013-2014, Housing Property Services (our repairs, planned maintenance, warm homes and asset management teams) received 48% of complaints, followed by Housing Services (housing officers etc.), which had 28%. The types of complaints received related to lack of communication, service delivery (including Mears complaints), charges and failure to act. Of the 94 complaints received in total, 51% related to Repairs and Maintenance issues.

Categories of Complaints

When a complaint is received it is assigned a category, relating to the overall nature of the complaint (for example, 'Lack of Communication', 'Service Delivery' or 'Staff Conduct'). A comparison of the most common types of complaints that were received between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 is shown below.

Stage One, Two and Three Housing Complaints

	2012-13	2013-14
Stage 1	65	89
Stage 2	8	5
Stage 3	1	0
Total	74	94

Closed Complaints

	2012-13	2013-14
Upheld	34	26
Not Upheld	40	64
Still Open	N/A	4 (as of 31/03/2014)
Total	74	94

2012-2013

Service Delivery	32%
Failure to Act	23%
Not understanding processes	15%

2013-2014

Service Delivery	31%
Failure to Act	36%
Not understanding processes	13%

Top Methods of Logging Complaints



1st - Website



2nd - E-mail



3rd - Post

During 2013-2014 the most common method of logging a complaint with us was through our website, with 49% of our customers choosing to use this medium. 21% were received via e-mail and 18% reached us through the post/letter.

Compliments

2013 - 2014

In 2012-2013 we received fourteen compliments during the course of the year. For the 2013-2014 period this grew to thirty-five. Four of these related to Repairs and Maintenance, one to Estate Services, one for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and twenty-three for Staff and Customer Service. The remaining six compliments were categorised under 'Other'. The chart to the right shows the housing service areas which received positive feedback.

Housing Service	Number of compliments
Traveller Liaison	1
Supported Housing	4
Housing Strategic Services	3
Housing Services	11
Housing Property Services	8
Housing Options and Advice	8

The 'Other' category includes:

- Housing Company compliments
- Warm Homes compliments
- Tenant compliments of tenant magazine
- Internal praise regarding a presentation

Telephone Performance



In 2013-2014 we received 37,828 telephone calls into our housing department here at Cambourne; these would have either come in straight to us directly, or have been transferred by either our own contact centre or Mears 24-7 (who look after our repair calls).

Mears 24-7 is a specialist contact centre that mainly serves the housing maintenance sector, and they have been handling our repair calls since Mears first took over the repairs contract in April 2012. In addition to this, our own in-house contact centre was opened in 2012 and takes all of the council's general enquiries - including housing. Some of the stats for both contact centres for the April 2013 to March 2014 period are overleaf.

Mears 24-7

- 21,394 - Total number of calls received
- 20,985 - Total number of calls handled
- 18 seconds - Average speed on answer
- 98.1% - Percentage of calls answered
- 1.9% - Percentage of calls abandoned
- 2 minutes, 42 seconds - Average delay to abandon

SCDC Contact Centre

- 175,797 - Total number of calls received by our contact centre (relating to all services areas)
- 11,780 - Total number of calls received directly to the SCDC Housing Services line (0345 045 0051)
- 77.07% - Percentage of calls to the Housing Services line handled
- 84.69% - Percentage of calls to the Housing Services line resolved at first contact
- 3 minutes and 12 seconds - Average time taken to answer calls to the Housing Services line



'STAR' Satisfaction Survey

In May of 2014 we sent out a satisfaction survey called 'STAR' (Survey of Tenants And Residents). We wanted to find out what you thought of our services since our last 'STAR' survey, which was carried out back in 2012.

We decided to carry out the survey differently this year, instead of using an external company to survey the whole district, we decided to trial using in-house resources to prepare; send and collate responses, concentrating on an area at a time (approximately 1,000 tenants and leaseholders). This first area covered 20 villages, and we are looking to survey a further 26 villages early in 2015.

It is really important for us to assess how we are performing, so that we can see what is going well and what needs to be improved. So we want to take this opportunity to thank those who took part, and would also ask those that may receive a survey in the near future to take the time to fill it out honestly and return it back to us. Your feedback is highly valuable to us and can really help shape & better the service we provide.

Survey Results from May 2014.

Number of forms sent: 889 - Number of respondents: 255 (29% return rate)

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with our housing service?

- 81% Satisfied
- 10% Dissatisfied
- 9% Neither

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?

- 80% Satisfied
- 8% Dissatisfied
- 12% Neither

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?

- 89% Satisfied
- 5% Dissatisfied
- 6% Neither

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?

- 83% Satisfied
- 6% Dissatisfied
- 10% Neither

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your service charge provides value for money?

- 69% Satisfied
- 9% Dissatisfied
- 22% Neither

Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way our housing service deals with repairs & maintenance?

- 77% Satisfied
- 12% Dissatisfied
- 11% Neither

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that our housing service listens to your views and acts upon them?

- 65% Satisfied
- 15% Dissatisfied
- 20% Neither

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities to get involved in improving the housing services?

- 57% Satisfied
- 3% Dissatisfied
- 40% Neither

Overall satisfaction with the housing service (within the area surveyed) has increased by 10% since the last survey was carried out in 2012.

Heating Your Home

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the heating system in your home?

- 80% Satisfied
- 14% Dissatisfied
- 5% Neither

Do you feel financially able to adequately heat your home as and when you need to?

- 68% Yes
- 32% No

Access to the Internet

Do you use the internet?

- 43% Yes (either at home or outside (e.g. library, family etc.))
- 57% No

Top three reasons why people advised they did not use the internet*...

- 50% Do not want to use it
- 48% Do not have access to it
- 35% Lack confidence/skills

*more than one option could be selected

Over the coming year we will be looking at options to help tenants get online as part of our work with digital inclusion (see page 7).

Monday - Friday (8am to 5.30pm)

03450 450 061 | Benefits

03450 450 062 | Building Control

03450 455 214 | Elections

03450 450 063 | Environmental Services

0800 731 1892 | Fraud

03450 450 051 | Housing Services

03450 455 218 | Payments (automated)

03450 455 215 | Planning

03450 450 064 | Revenues

03450 450 500 | General Enquiries

Emergency Out Of Hours Numbers (after 5.30pm)

Dangerous Structure Enquiries (Building Control)

01253 501 055

Environmental Health Emergency

0845 609 5437

Homelessness Emergency Service

0845 609 5438

Repair Numbers

Housing Repairs, Electric Heating and Hot Water Repairs (**Mears, 24hrs**)

0800 085 1313

Gas Heating/Hot Water, Repairs and Servicing (**Morrison, 24hrs**)

0845 650 0065

Oil and Solid Fuel Heating, Repairs and Servicing (**Rule & Parker, 24hrs**)

01480 466 893

Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) Heating, Repairs and Servicing

(**Rule & Parker, 24hrs**) **01480 466 893**

(**Foster, 24hrs**) **01945 586 999**

Gas Escape, Smell of Fumes, Suspected Carbon Monoxide Leak (National Grid, 24hrs)

0800 111 999