

Annual Report to Tenants

2016-2017

Working together to improve housing services

Working Together

Your Home

Your Tenancy

Your Community and
Neighbourhood

Value for Money

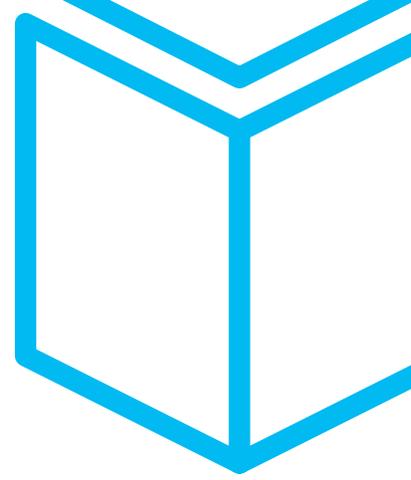


A great city to live in

 Birmingham
City Council



Annual Report 2016-17



All figures used in this report are current as of 31 March 2017

Dear tenants and leaseholders,

Welcome to our latest **Annual Report to Tenants** which sets out how Birmingham City Council has performed as your landlord during 2016-17 against the National Housing Standards for social landlords, which are set out below:

1. Working Together

2. Your Home

3. Your Tenancy

4. Your Neighbourhood and Community

5. Value for Money

The Annual Report to Tenants is our opportunity to explain to you how well the services we provide are performing and celebrate our achievements for 2016-17. We have shown how we did last year, what has gone well, where we need to improve and have highlighted our priorities for the year ahead to help achieve our aim of providing great homes and the best services for all our tenants and leaseholders.

As well as the Annual Report for Tenants we have also updated you on the services we provide, how we pay for them and our priorities for the year ahead through our website and City Housing Liaison Board.

During 2016-17 we are pleased to inform you that we have made good progress in achieving the following service priorities:

- We have launched the new 'Housing Allocations Scheme' to make better use of the limited housing stock and have started the re-registration process.
- We have commissioned Central Training and Consultancy to offer a 10 course programme to HLB members in recognition of the key role they play in the co-regulation of housing services in Birmingham.
- Over 60 HLB members attended the HLB Conference on Welfare Reform and Tenancy Conditions. The feedback from the Conference was overwhelmingly positive and it was great to see so many members engaged on a topic that could affect so many.

- The repairs contractors have carried out 262,224 responsive and gas repair jobs across the City and 4,089 void properties have been made available for re-letting.
- Capital improvements have been undertaken to 5,937 council homes across the City.
- We have built 217 homes for rent and 99 homes for outright sale.
- BCC were awarded 'Social Housing Provider of the Year 2016' at the West Midlands Residential Property Awards and have been shortlisted for the same award in 2017.
- The rent service collected £832,698 from former tenants during 2016/17.
- Published the Birmingham Financial Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2020 in consultation and with the involvement of partners such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Department of Work and Pensions.
- We introduced a customer service triage process in the Hubs to assist resolving customer enquiries at the first point of contact.
- We have introduced locally-based teams to remove dumped rubbish and fly tipped waste. Over the course of 2016/17 these teams have collected and disposed of 2,014 tonnes from housing land and 363 tonnes of waste was removed from clearing communal sites in partnership with Regulation and Enforcement. HLB members, residents and other partners joined housing teams in the November 'All out clear up days' which resulted in 34.85 tonnes of waste been collected and disposed of.
- In March 2017 over 3,000 people including residents, HLB members, tenants, housing staff, partner agencies and community groups came together to take part in the 'Great British Spring Clean' events that took place across the City. These events were so successful and helped collect and dispose of 63 tonnes of rubbish.
- We have started the review of the 'Conditions of Tenancy' and the Tenancy Handbook. Tenant representatives are involved in the drafting of new clauses and we will be consulting all tenants on these during 2018.
- We have introduced a new delivery model for Tenancy Management services.
- Over 4,000 warning letters were sent to tenants over the state of their property or garden demonstrating our commitment to tackle tenancy breaches.
- 'Think Family' workers have supported 368 families.
- To support Birmingham's street community a tasking process was introduced in 2016. The Tasking process which is led by the ASB team and supported by both statutory and commissioned services has both

protected the most vulnerable and ensured that there are consequences to those who present a risk to others. This process received the highest level of recognition at the 2016 Chamberlain Awards by winning the 'Unique Contribution' award due to its success.

For the year ahead the Council will continue to find ways to work more efficiently and effectively to improve the standard of services for tenants and leaseholders and to increase customer choice and flexibility.

To do this we will:

- hold an event to celebrate 25 years of the Housing Liaison Board Movement in Birmingham.
- carry out a contract review of the first 12 months with our new Repairs Contractors.
- continue to invest in the council housing stock with an emphasis on green initiatives and improvements.
- complete 418 (332 rent and 86 sale) new Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) homes.
- ensure all people who have re-registered for the new Allocations Scheme have their applications assessed in a timely manner.
- implement our new sheltered housing model. This model will ensure that we deliver housing related support to those older people who need it most.
- procure new contracts for the cleaning of communal areas for around 650 low rise blocks. Tenant representatives will be assisting us with assessing the quality of interested contractors and who the work is awarded to.
- consult all tenants on the review of Tenancy Conditions .
- update the Tenant Handbook and publish it online.
- publish our revised Tenancy Service Standards.
- The ASB Service will set up a 'Street Homelessness Taskforce' which will attempt to tackle the increasing issue of street homelessness and associated behaviours across the City.

We hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report and that it gives you an interesting and helpful snapshot of how we have performed and our priorities for the year ahead.

To let us know what you think about the Annual Report to Tenants please go to **www.birmingham.gov.uk/residentinvolvement** and fill out the online survey form - it will only take a few minutes and your feedback is very important to us and will help inform future reports.

SECTION 1 – 'WORKING TOGETHER'



Involvement and Empowerment

Tenant Involvement is at the heart of everything we do at Birmingham City Council. With over 1,000 tenant representatives we have a long standing tenant involvement movement which we are proud of and want to build on, to help shape the future of housing services in Birmingham.

Key Achievements 2016-17:

- Following a rigorous procurement process, the Resident Involvement Team and Chair of CHLB appointed Central Consultancy to carry out the Tenant Training Programme 2017/18. The purpose of this programme is to broaden the influence of HLBs and other tenant groups so that they can increase their impact on housing in their communities. It represents a further investment by Birmingham City Council in HLBs and their members, in recognition of the significance of their co-regulation role and contribution by HLB members to ensure that co-regulation of housing is successful in Birmingham. Investing in training also represents a key commitment of Birmingham City Council to enable members to achieve the new HLB Kitemark. The modules HLB Members can apply to go on include:



- Working together.
- Involving everyone.
- Advanced involvement.
- Effective meetings – harnessing your power to influence.
- Governance and Leadership.
- Importance of co-regulation and tenant scrutiny.
- Figuring it out – understanding the numbers.
- Understanding Housing finance.
- Social housing: past, present and future.
- Understanding the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

- On 21 March 2017 over 60 HLB members attended a Tenant Conference at the Jurys Inn on Welfare Reform and Tenancy Conditions. This conference was organised by Birmingham City Council in partnership with the CHLB's Welfare Reform Subgroup. Workshops were held on the plans and timelines for Welfare Reform, with a more in depth look at Universal Credit and Rent, and a demonstration of the online application form for Universal Credit. This was followed by an afternoon session officially launching the Tenancy Conditions review, calling for volunteers for the project and taking initial comments. All workshops were facilitated in house by BCC and DWP Officers, and partners of Birmingham Financial Inclusion were in attendance to give delegates one to one advice and information on their services.

The feedback from the conference was overwhelmingly positive, and it was great to see so many members engaged on a topic that could affect so many.

- We have continued to promote the 'How to Involve' document at local events and input the 'How to Involve' survey forms and sending them to Tenant Participation Officers (TPOs) to contact interested tenants and leaseholders.
- The Annual Report to Tenants 2015-16 was put together for tenants and leaseholders and made available on the BCC Website.
- TPOs worked with Housing Liaison Boards (HLBs) to complete a HLB Annual Report and Action Plan for 2016/17 setting out their priorities for the year ahead.
- The Kitemark assessment this year was drafted from easily evidenced areas of the Kitemark criteria document. For the Kitemark assessment, HLBs were scored on four areas that stemmed from the checklist, to ensure consistent practice. The categories for scoring were Governance, Representation & Communication, Co-regulation, and Monitoring Outcomes. As a result of the scoring mechanism, 7 HLBs have received a 2 year certificate, 12 HLBs have received a 1 year certificate and 9 HLBs have been put on Probation.
- Each year, Birmingham City Council, in partnership with the Housing Liaison Boards (HLB) run the Birmingham in Bloom competition for Council tenants and leaseholders. This competition is a chance for them to show us the pride they have in their homes – and, in turn their efforts contribute to cleaner, greener neighbourhoods across the city. In addition to gardening this year Birmingham in Bloom incorporated the street scene scheme and included the following category – 'Positive contribution to the environment category.' This year Birmingham in Bloom had its



biggest set of entries and the awards ceremony was attended by over one hundred tenants and leaseholders.

- We have continued to support the work of the Performance Monitoring Group which is responsible for scrutinising City and District performance information with the aim of improving housing services. In particular this Group has monitored the standard of work carried out by our new repairs contractors and has been instrumental in driving performance improvements in the new Repairs Service.
- The Welfare Reform and Financial Inclusion Subgroup continue to support their action plan. The group have undertaken a number of 'Financial Capability Community Events' to deliver the 'House to Home' concept in relation to pre-tenancy work. Events at Billesley Fire Station and Financial Capability Week 2016 supported some 2,800 residents of Birmingham. Through the work of the group new partnerships have been established and we now have up to 30 partners who are involved.
- The 'TMO (Tenant Management Organisation) Monitoring and Support Framework' document has been agreed and implemented and all TMOs and BCC are now providing the required governance, financial and performance monitoring information within the required timescales.
- The TMO Support Team has re-established a positive working relationship with all TMOs.
- The TMO Support Team have carried out an in depth analysis of the Tenants Hall's and worked to ensure statutory checks are carried out and property log books are updated.
- We have received funding from the 'Longbridge Infrastructure' for the installation of a new boiler and radiators at Culmington Hall as well as supported the redevelopment of the nursery play area.
- We have provided training to TMOs and Tenants Hall members as part of the Tenant Training Programme.

Priorities for 2017-18

- We will continue to strengthen and expand our network of tenant representatives by supporting and promoting new forms of resident involvement.
- We will hold an event to celebrate 25 years of the Housing Liaison Board Movement.
- We will produce an 'Annual Report to Tenants' for 2016-17.
- We will develop a database of tenant representatives which can be used to promote tenant involvement activities.
- We will look at ways to consult and engage with tenants through social media training.
- We will support the continuation of the Tenant Training Programme 2017/18.
- We will review the template and criteria for the HLB Walkabouts.
- To ensure continuous improvement we will review the award of a Kitemark to all HLBs on probation and will support TPOs in producing an improvement plan.
- We will review the categories and scope of Birmingham in Bloom.
- We will deliver the outcomes for the first year of the financial inclusion strategy action plan.
- We will pilot all objectives from the financial inclusion strategy in St Georges area of Aston.
- We will develop a pre-tenancy strategy working with Birmingham Strategic Partnership and WUMBUS that will support new tenants to maintain their tenancies.
- The Welfare Reform and Financial Inclusion Subgroup will continue to support tenants with the impact of Welfare Reform with a stronger focus on Universal Credit Live Service. The group will continue to focus on community events to deliver key messages and partnership support to those most vulnerable in the city. The group will play an important role in establishing and supporting both the pre-tenancy strategy and the financial inclusion strategy and developing the House to Home concept.
- We will review, develop and agree a consistent and appropriate set of performance measures and corresponding targets with all 5 TMOs.
- We will ensure the MMAs (Modular Management Agreements) in place with all TMOs are up to date and accurately reflect all current Council policies.

- We will undertake and complete annual and five year total performance reviews for all TMOs, in line with the requirements of their MMAs.
- We will ensure that statutory checks are carried out on the property log books of Tenant Halls to ensure they are up to date.
- We will undertake stock condition surveys' of the 9 tenants halls managed by residents.
- We will carry out market rent reviews and agree reasonable rents with management committees responsible for the day to day running of Tenant Halls.
- We will provide bid writing training and other training as necessary for Tenant Hall Members.
- We will update the tenancy agreement of nine Tenants Halls ensuring responsibilities for BCC and Tenants Halls are clear.
- We will support the relocation of user groups based at the Meadway prior to demolition in January 2018.



Customer Service, Choice and Complaints

Birmingham City Council records all complaints and compliments.

There is a 3 stage complaints system. The numbers of complaints in 2016-17 in each stage is shown below and is compared to the complaints in 2015-16.

	2015-16 Total Number of Complaints	2016-17 Total Number of Complaints
Stage 1 settled immediately	24	6
Stage 2 investigated and a response within 15 working days	3233	4295
Stage 3 Stage 2 decision is reviewed by a manager or designated officer	129	239

The number of stage two complaints has increased from 3,233 in 2015–16 to 4,295 in 2016–17, an increase of 1,062 (33%). In 2016/17 of the 4,295 complaints at stage two across Housing, 33% of these were upheld, 31% partially upheld and 36% not upheld.

We also record the number of compliments received from customers. In 2016–17 we received 257 compliments (an increase of 81 compared to 2015-16) of which 60% of these compliments were about Housing Management.

Key Achievements in 2016-17:

- Capital improvements have been undertaken to **5,937** council homes across the City.
- **4089** void properties have been made available for re-letting.
- The new contractors have also delivered a series of positive actions and achievements through the 'social value' element of the contract. These include – investing over £85,000 and in excess of 2000 hours volunteering in the local community through fundraising and charity events, appointing 31 apprentices and trainees across all contract areas and over 210 work placements provided to local people.
- We have built 219 homes for rent and 99 homes for outright sale through the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust.

- BCC were awarded 'Social Housing Provider of the Year 2016' at the West Midlands Residential Property Awards and shortlisted for the same award in 2017.
- We have completed our 1000th BMHT home for outright sale.
- BCC have worked through the Housing Birmingham Partnership to develop a jointly agreed strategy for housing in the city. Our vision is that Birmingham is a great place to live for all residents and our priorities are a strong supply of new, high-quality housing in the city; citizens are able to find, access and sustain housing that meets their needs and improving neighbourhood management and the quality of homes. The Housing Birmingham Partnership brings together partners from different organisations in the city such as health and the voluntary sector, as well as private landlords and housing association representatives. The strategy sets a strategic direction for the city; partners will work together to develop more detailed plans and to drive implementation.
- The housing options service has moved to providing advice, guidance and assistance from four centres to a single centre based in Newtown. Over the last year 7,903 possible occurrences of homelessness were prevented.
- We have successfully bid for £1.7m over 3 years as part of the Government's Trailblazer scheme to pilot new ways of tackling the root causes of homelessness.
- We have launched the Council's new Housing Allocations Scheme which aims to make better use of the limited housing stock and have started the re-registration process.
- The rent service collected £832,698 from former tenants during 2016/17. It also reduced the total value of arrears to £12,277,189.
- We have completed a review of the lettings suites resulting in a new model of partnership working with a focus on delivering wider support for those tenants in greatest need.
- We have introduced a customer service triage process to assist with resolving customer enquiries at first point of contact.
- We will continue to deliver the annual visiting programme, focusing on properties we have not gained entry to.
- We have established a team of street scene officers working in our housing neighbourhoods across the city. They engage with citizens on how best to keep the local environment clean and tidy and helped dispose of over 2,014 tonnes of dumped waste on housing land.
- In a partnership programme with Regulation and Enforcement 180 communal sites were cleared of rubbish amounting to 363 tonnes.

- 400 citizens have signed up to good Neighbourhood Agreements to keep the area clean and tidy.
- 127 clean up events were attended by around 3,000 residents and took place in all 40 wards across the city as part of the 'Great British Spring Clean.' 63 tonnes of rubbish was collected and disposed of.
- ASB Services have made a number of successful applications using the powers available. Some particular highlights are:
 - 63 Injunctions and Undertakings. This includes swiftly and robustly dealing with 26 breaches of those Orders and processing 7 committal proceedings.
 - 4 new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) to add to the 7 which are already in place across the City.
 - 14 suspended and outright Possession Orders.
 - 1 Closure Order.
- To support Birmingham's street community a tasking process was introduced in 2016. The Tasking process which is led by the ASB team and supported by both statutory and commissioned services has both protected the most vulnerable and ensured that there are consequences for those who present a risk to others. This process received the highest level of recognition at the 2016 Chamberlain Awards by winning the 'Unique Contribution' award and due to its success.
- The 'Think Family' workers have supported over 300 families with multiple/complex needs.

Priorities for 2017-18

- We will hold an event to celebrate 25 years of the Housing Liaison Board Movement in Birmingham.
- We will carry out a contract review of the first 12 months with our new Repairs Contractors.
- We will continue to invest in the Council housing stock with an emphasis on green initiatives and improvements.
- We will continue to work with our Repairs Contractors to implement the added value and additional social value elements of the contract.
- We will complete 580 (482 rent and 98 sale) new Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) homes.
- We will deliver our first new BMHT homes on major regeneration schemes at Meadway and Pool Farm.
- We will ensure all people who have re-registered for the new Allocations Scheme have their applications assessed in a timely manner.
- We will train staff on the new homeless prevention duties that come into force when the new 'Homeless Reduction Act' is introduced.
- We will continue to educate and empower applicants at pre-tenancy stage to enable them to be digitally, financially and tenant ready.
- We will continue to support the new House to Home project with a range of partners. This project shows prospective tenants how to furnish a property on a budget.
- We will review Letting Suites and how they operate with a focus to do more for new tenants before they move in, focusing on the effects of the welfare and benefit reforms.
- We will continue to evaluate and review how the Mobile Security Patrol Service operates.
- We will implement a redesign of the Customer Service Hubs and introduce a more consistent, efficient and effective service to reduce demand placed on the tenancy management and ASB service.
- We will implement service redesign proposals for how we identify and carry out Annual Visits.
- We will implement our new sheltered housing model. This model will ensure that we deliver housing related support to those older people who need it most.

- We will be procuring new contracts for the cleaning of communal areas for around 650 low rise blocks. Tenant representatives will be assisting us with assessing the quality of interested contractors and who the work is awarded to.
- We will offer 32 apprenticeships for people to work in neighbourhoods on environmental cleansing.
- We will consult all tenants on the review of Tenancy Conditions.
- We will update the Tenant Handbook and publish it on line.
- We will publish our revised Tenancy Service Standards.
- The ASB Service will set up a Street Homelessness Taskforce which will attempt to tackle the increasing issue of Street Homelessness and associated behaviours across the City.
- The ASB service will also continue to work with the West Midlands Police Partnerships Team to better develop our Community Protection Notice process so we can make better use of this tool to tackle fly tipping, litter and un-kept gardens.



SECTION 2 – 'YOUR HOME'



Repairs and Maintenance

Contract for the provision of Responsive Repairs & Maintenance Services, Gas Servicing, Capital Improvement Work Programmes including Major Adaptations to Council Housing Stock.

General Overview

The outcome of the procurement process resulted in three contractors being appointed, two of which were new to the City for delivering the repairs and gas servicing and maintenance elements of work. These are Wates Living Space and Keepmoat Regeneration whilst Fortem (previously known as Willmott Dixon Partnerships) continue but with the new addition of gas servicing and maintenance.

We have now completed the first year of new changed contract provision for the following services; Responsive Repairs & Maintenance, Gas Servicing and maintenance, Capital Improvement Work Programmes including Major Adaptations.

There has been a real drive on the part of the contractors to succeed and perform at the highest level whilst facing the challenges of implementing new systems, technology and the new 'My Homes' service ethos. Whilst the intent to succeed is not yet being fully realised across all aspects of the contract, service improvements are already being experienced in the following areas.

- Flexible repairs appointment booking.
- Reduced void turnaround times.
- Improved customer service.
- Reduction in the number of complaints received.
- Reducing level of follow up phone calls.
- Co-located joint working between contractor and the call centre.
- We will also achieve significant savings helping to support the savings target for the Housing Revenue account as a result of national rent reduction.

To ensure the successful delivery of the Repairs and Maintenance service to a total of 62,616 homes, the contracts have the following resources in place:

- **Keepmoat** – 76 Vans and operatives / 32 staff.
- **Wates** – 268 Vans and operatives / 127 staff.
- **Fortem** - 176 vans and operatives / 80 staff .

Key Achievements for 2016/17

Since the start of the contract there has been;

- **262,224** responsive and gas repair jobs raised across the City.
- **100%** Gas servicing reported across the City.
- **1297** Fire Protection works carried out.
- **14225** Electrical test and inspections carried out.
- **5937** planned capital improvements were carried out to homes across the City. This included:
 - **383** Kitchens modernised.
 - **419** Bathrooms modernised.
 - **2308** Central Heating boilers replaced.
 - **1072** Windows replaced.
 - **1212** Doors replaced.
 - **451** Roofs replaced.
 - **92** Soffits and fascia's replaced.
- **4089** void refurbishments completed across the City.
- **Other Indicators** - General feedback from Housing Liaison Boards members and our call centre has been positive.
- Responsive and gas repairs jobs raised across the City are showing a reduction.
 - 2014/15 **285,260**.
 - 2015/16 **280,096**.
 - 2016/17 **262,224**.

- We are giving customers greater choice in terms of the appointment slots that suit them. To achieve first time problem resolution we have introduced a Housing Resolution Team jointly staffed by the contractors and the Contact Centre, which has reduced the need for follow up calls.
- All contractors provided and delivered their Winter plans and have responded well to inclement weather incidents and emergency situations. Positive feedback is being received in respect of capital investment work including provision of major adaptations.
- Contractors are co-located with our contract management teams to improve joint working.

The contractors have also delivered a series of positive actions and achievements for 2016/17 linked to the social value element of the contract, such as:

- Supporting HLB events such as digital inclusion.
- Investing over £85,000 and in excess of 2000 hours volunteering were spent in the local community by our contractors through fundraising and charity events.
- Supporting over 8,128 hours of work experience to 188 people in Birmingham.
- Supporting 31 apprentices and trainees appointed across all contract areas.
- Spending £15.4m with local suppliers and Social Enterprises.
- Providing 210 work placements to local people.
- Supported various community projects with over 30 workshops being delivered to local schools.

Priorities for 2017-18

- Carry out a contract review of the first 12 months with our new Repairs Contractors.
- Continue to invest in our Council stock with an emphasis on Green Initiatives and improvements in particular to our high rise and low rise stock.
- Work with our partners to improve our stock information and develop planned maintenance programmes that will continue to reduce the number of responsive repairs requests over the life of the contract. Carrying out full stock condition surveys to 100% of our properties to ensure we have detailed and accurate up to date asset information.
- Work with our contractors to implement the added value and additional social value elements included within their tender submissions.
- Continue to meet our statutory obligations under housing legislation, especially fire protection, legionella, electrical testing and inspection, gas servicing, heating and hot water.
- To replace kitchens and bathrooms.
- To carry out structural works to prolong the life of high rise and low rise properties.
- Improving levels of thermal efficiency, including where possible with the assistance of grant funding.
- Providing aids and adaptations to assist residents to live more independently at home.
- We aim to ensure that all our stock meets a minimum requirement of energy efficiency D rating.

The Voids Service

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- Maintaining the improved performance on void turnaround working with our new Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement contractors who helped to reduce the average time to repair dwellings to an average of 15.4 days compared to 18.7 days in 2015/16 and lower than in any of the previous 5 years.
- Targeting and successfully re-letting our previously long term hard-to-let dwellings helping to increase rent income to the Housing Revenue Account.
- Working with our Void Tenant Inspectors alongside BCC technical officers to inspect properties before and after Void repair work is completed to ensure standards are being met.

Priorities for 2017-2018

- Working with our new contractors to identify service improvements designed to further reduce void turnaround times and ensure quality standards are maintained.
- Continuing the approach to re-let any remaining long-term hard-to-let dwellings and maximise income to the Housing Revenue Account.
- Understanding the impacts of the new Allocations Policy and Abrisas system to minimise any impact on void turnaround.

Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust

Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) is the Council's vehicle for building new rented and market homes across the City. Since 2009, the Council, through the BMHT, has become the single largest housing developer in Birmingham, and is now building over 30% of all the new homes in the City.

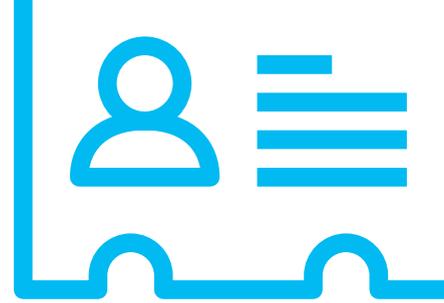
Key Achievements for 2016-17

- We have built 219 homes for rent and 99 homes for outright sale.
- We were awarded 'Social Housing Provider of the Year 2016' at the West Midlands Residential Property Awards and have been shortlisted for the same award in 2017. Completed the 2000th BMHT home which was built in Newtown, Aston.
- The landmark event of our 1,000th outright sale home completed and sold. The sales programme continues to target those in need to create mixed sustainable communities across the City.
- We have successfully launched our new direct sales brand 'Forward Homes' selling high quality new homes direct to the general public. These sales will generate around £10m in sales profit that will be re-cycled back into our BMHT housing for rent programme.
- Mainstreamed our award-winning 'Building Birmingham Scholarship' initiative into our overall housing development programme. This was launched in 2013. It is funded by the BMHT contractor's and this supports students for degree level courses in the construction, design, and engineering and associated fields. The Scholarship is currently financially supporting around 70 young people through their studies and we are in the process of recruiting our next cohort of students this year. In all 40 students took on Easter and Summer placements with BMHT and its partners and consultants, helping them to gain valuable insight and experience into the day to day work within the construction industry for design and delivery for both social rented and private sales of homes. Already 10 students have successfully secured fulltime employment with partner organisations through the support of the Scholarship.
- BBS shortlisted for 'Midlands Training Scheme of the Year 2017' award.
- A comprehensive audit and satisfaction survey undertaken in Autumn 2016 revealed extremely high satisfaction levels amongst tenants on all schemes built. For a second year in a row, we completed more rented homes than all of the Housing Associations operating in the City.
- We have launched 'In Reach' - our new private rented sector (PRS) arm and have started on site with our first scheme at 'Embankment' at Brindley place.

Priorities for 2017-2018

- Complete 418 (332 rent and 86 sale) new BMHT homes.
- To start on site with an additional 244 BMHT homes.
- To launch our standard house types catalogue for the development of BMHT homes in partnership with Hemingway Design.
- To showcase our nationally acclaimed achievements at the LGA Housing Conference held in Birmingham in July 2017.
- To complete our long-term regeneration programmes of mixed-tenure housing at Newtown, Burchfield and Egg Hill.
- To deliver our first new homes on major regeneration schemes at Meadway and Pool Farm.





SECTION 3 – ‘YOUR TENANCY’

Housing Need

The Housing Options service provides advice and assistance to those in need of accommodation. This includes allocating Council and housing association housing stock, assessing homeless applications, offering homeless prevention advice and providing emergency accommodation.

Key Achievements for 2016/17

- The service moved to providing advice, guidance and assistance from four centres to a single centre based in Newtown. At this office there is a strong focus on the prevention of homelessness that includes staff providing advice on crisis intervention (providing emergency support), debt advice and managing rent or service charge arrears. Over the last year 7,903 possible occurrences of homelessness were prevented.
- We have successfully bid for £1.7m over 3 years as part of the Government's 'Trailblazer Scheme' to pilot new ways of tackling the root causes of homelessness.
- The assessment of 8,076 applications for housing and the allocation of 4,209 Council properties and 836 properties owned by housing associations.
- The launch of a new Allocations Scheme designed to make better use of the limited housing stock by ensuring it is allocated to those with the most need and entitlement.
- The launch of the re-registration process for over 20,000 people on the housing register under the old scheme.
- Continue to support people on the housing register who find it difficult to bid for properties online.
- The renovation of an unused former Council care home to open a new homeless centre to accommodate homeless families.
- 83% of people under 25 who visited the Youth Hub (a partnership between St Basils, Housing Options and Children Services) were prevented from becoming homeless.

- Launched new content on www.birmingham.gov.uk/housing to ensure anyone can have easy access to the information and advice they need when considering their housing options. This includes information on the likely availability of social housing if they join the housing register.
- Continue to work with 'Let to Birmingham', the Council's social letting agency, which, last year, let good quality private rented lettings to 168 households at risk of homelessness.
- Promoted the online service www.swapandmove.co.uk which allows tenants to search for other tenants who might want to swap their properties with them.
- Supported tenants wishing to downsize by offering practical advice and assistance through the 'Wise Move' scheme.

Priorities for 2017-18

- To ensure all people who have re-registered for the new Allocations Scheme have their applications assessed in a timely manner.
- To reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households.
- To improve the advice and assistance and expand the range of options available when trying to prevent households from becoming homeless.
- To continue to develop the 'Trailblazer' projects and incorporate successes into our day to day work.
- To increase the availability of good quality private rented accommodation by working with the City's social lettings agency, 'Let to Birmingham'.
- To expand and improve on monitoring and responding to customer feedback from people who use our services.

Supporting our Tenants with Welfare Reform

The Social Sector Size Criteria

The Social Sector Size Criteria (under occupation charges) was introduced by the Government in April 2013.

- 8,838 households are subject to the under occupation charge in Birmingham. 61% (5,423) of these households are council tenants.
- 77% of restricted council households are under occupying their property by one bedroom and are subject to a 14% reduction to their Housing Benefit. The average reduction is £13.63 per week.
- 23% of restricted council households are under occupying by 2 or more bedrooms and are subject to a 25% reduction. Their average reduction is £25.01 per week.

To help and support council tenants suffering hardship because of the Social Sector Size Criteria the council awarded £1.98m in Discretionary Housing Payments.

Benefit Cap

The government's Benefit Cap, which restricts the amount of all benefits that working age people can receive, was implemented in Birmingham in August 2013. As part of the Summer Budget 2015 the government announced that it would lower the benefit cap to £20,000 per annum.

The £20,000 'cap' came into force from 7 November 2016 and limits total benefits to:

- £384.62 per week for couples (with or without children) and lone parents
- £257.69 per week for single adults

The Government also made households who receive Carers Allowance or Guardian Allowance exempt from the benefits cap when the lower cap was enforced.

- 3,086 households are subject to the benefit cap. 39% (1,192) of these households are council tenants.

To help and support council tenants suffering hardship because of the benefits cap the council awarded nearly £867,000 in Discretionary Housing Payments.

Future Welfare Reforms for Housing Benefit

The Government will implement a number of new reforms to the welfare system that will impact some council tenants who receive Housing Benefit.

These include:

- From 6 April 2017 the government will limit support to no more than 2 children for all new entitlements to Housing Benefit, or where, in an existing Housing Benefit case, a new child or young person becomes part of the family on or after that date and are not included in the claimant's Child Tax Credit assessment.
- From 1 April 2017 the governments Social Sector Size Criteria will in certain circumstances allow an extra bedroom for Housing Benefit claimants:
 1. when a disabled child or disabled non-dependant adult reasonably requires, and has, overnight care from a non-resident carer (or group of carers) and is in receipt of a specified disability benefit; and
 2. in respect of a disabled couple, when the local authority is satisfied that a couple cannot reasonably share a bedroom as a result of a member of the couple's disability and that member is in receipt of a specified disability benefit.
- From 3 April 2017 the Employment Support Allowance (ESA) work-related activity component will not be available to new ESA claims. Affected claimants found to have limited capability for work following the work capability assessment will not receive an additional component. The additional component of Housing Benefit has also been removed to reflect this change in ESA.

Benefits Service

The aim of the Benefits Service is to maximise income to citizens by awarding benefit promptly and accurately, and promoting the take up of relevant welfare benefits. This is achieved by effectively administering the housing benefit and council tax support schemes, to enable maximisation of Government subsidy whilst providing service excellence. This in turn will help to reduce the number of households in fuel poverty, help residents maintain their tenancy and reduce potential homelessness.

Key Achievements for 2016/17

- The Benefits Service has continued to improve the collection of housing benefit overpayments – this has resulted in additional income above target to the general fund.
- Benefits Advice Team have successfully maximised income for vulnerable citizens in Birmingham by helping them to gain an additional £3.4million in welfare benefits.
- Improved performance in average days to award benefit. The 25 day target to award new claims has been achieved with the average days to award a new claim completed within 23 days.
- 2015/16 Final Subsidy claim resulted in an additional payment of £92,505 to the General fund.

Priorities for 2017/18

- Implement the new Future Operating Model.
- Design, consult upon and if appropriate implement a revised Council Tax Support scheme for Birmingham in readiness for 2018/19.
- Full review of Risk Based Verification.
- Implement the new document management solution.
- Maximise subsidy income to the Council.
- To implement the DWP new 'Right Benefit Initiative'.
- Successfully manage the impact of Universal Credit.
- Review of 'Real Time Information' along with the introduction of WURTI (Wider use of Real Time Information).

Lettings Suites

The Council currently has four letting suites where residents are let properties and receive advice on what to consider before and after a housing tenancy is granted. To date about 20,000 tenants have passed through the letting suites receiving support where needed for the first 12 weeks of their tenancy.

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- Tenant sustainability maintained for the first 12 weeks and Benefit take up maximised.
- Rent arrears for new tenants at 12 weeks have decreased.
- We are continuing to support new tenants to manage and sustain their tenancy through the 'House 2 Home' project in partnership with Friendship Care and Housing, to support new tenants to manage and sustain their tenancies through working with BCC partners such as: Severn Trent Water, PASA, Money Line, Department of Work and Pensions.
- We continue to undertake community events under the umbrella of the 'House 2 Home' and 'Financial Inclusion' partnership led by CHLB Welfare Reform Sub Group Members. Over 100 residents were able to receive the support from our 'House to Home' partnership and other partner agencies such as Police, Fire, Health Services, training providers and CAB.
- Undertook visits to tenants most affected by the introduction of the Benefit Cap and helped them manage their reduction in overall benefit.
- Continued to provide Personal Budgeting Support in partnership with the DWP, to date this has been delivered to over 1500 residents.
- Letting Suites together with the CHLB Welfare Reform Sub Group members continue to provide food parcels for local food banks.
- Completed a comprehensive review of the service resulting in a new model of partnership working with a focus on delivering wider support for those tenants in greatest need.

Priorities for 2017-18

- To continue to educate and empower applicants at a pre-tenancy stage to enable them to be digitally, financially and tenant ready.
- To continue to support vulnerable new tenants to manage and sustain tenancies.
- To implement a new 'House to Home' project with a range of partners in the South of the City.
- To continue to support tenants with the expansion of Universal Credit, the impact of the Benefit Cap and other elements of the welfare reforms by introducing a personal budgeting support package ensuring that the most vulnerable tenants are able to manage and sustain their tenancies.
- The Lettings Suites currently carry out an extensive lettings service to nearly 5000 new tenants each year. The extensive and complicated effects of the new welfare and benefit reforms mean a priority for this year is to review the Lettings Suites and how they need to operate to help and advise applicants for housing.

Rents Service

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- The Rent Service continues to market Direct Debit (DD) to tenants and has successfully increased the number of tenants paying by DD from 8,165 at the start of the financial year to 9,463.
- This has resulted in an increase in DD transactions from 240,093 at the end of the 2015-16 financial year to 322,159 at the end of 2016-17 financial year. This is an increase of 34.18% in DD transactions and represents estimated savings of £266,908 a year in administrative costs (using giro payments as a comparative).
- In April 2016, the number of tenants with an online rent account numbered 4,527. This has increased by 5.3% to 4,767 at the end of the last financial year. This was a result of continuing to provide information about the ease of setting up the online account in our debt letters, on the website and over the phone.
- The Government introduced Welfare Benefit reforms in 2013. Since then, an increase has been made to the Benefit Cap outside London (in November 2016) to £20,000 for families and lone parents and £13,400 for single claimants. From February 2016, the Government introduced Universal Credit for single claimants who made a new claim or experienced a change in circumstances.

- Despite the challenging conditions created by these changes the Rent Service managed to reduce total arrears to £12,277,189 which is below the Council target of £12,600,000. The actual cash collection for 2016/17 was 98.07% which is 3.17% above the target of 94.9%.
- The Rent Service has continued to use “Your Views”, the City Council’s customer feedback system, and has maintained 100% of customer feedback responded to within the service level agreement of 10 working days. The Service also introduced a new user friendly webform at www.birmingham.gov.uk/enquiries for online enquires. As an indication of its success the service received 7,803 enquires in 2016/17.
- The Rent Service has provided very useful financial and practical support to tenants, some of whom are vulnerable or who are at risk of eviction, to ensure that they receive the support and advice that is needed. The service achieved this by conducting home visits and a total of 156,756 telephone conversations during the year.
- The total number of evictions carried out as a result of rent arrears in 2016-17 was 437, which represents 0.73% of tenancies. This is a decrease of 0.03% when compared with the previous year, but remains under the forecasted 1% of tenancies.
- The Rent Service introduced Cross Directorate “Eviction Panels” in November 2016 to do a final review of eviction cases with a view to preventing homelessness and to maximise the rent income recovered to reduce the outstanding debt. The panel includes staff from the homeless team, benefit service and disadvantaged families. The panel has reviewed 353 evictions and cancelled 22. It has recorded £50,280 extra payments and also prevented £59,592 from being transferred to former tenancy debt.
- The Rent Service ran a comprehensive campaign during the rent payment holidays to give customers in debt the opportunity to pay rent during these periods in December and March. This resulted in a £1,297,102 reduction in arrears in December 2016 and £1,235,376 in March 2017.
- The Rent Service collected £832,698 from former tenants during 2016/17. This was similar to the amount collected in the previous financial year (an increase of 0.4%). The service also reviewed the administration of former tenancy debt and will be implementing the changes in the next financial year. In the meantime, the service is conducting a pilot in order to evaluate the effectiveness of pursuing former tenancy debt with Money Judgement Orders.
- The Rent Service has recruited a specialist project manager in October 2016 to oversee the Council’s response in preparing for the digital roll out of Universal Credit by the Government. The project manager has since written and started the implementation of key projects that will enable tenants and the service to become Universal Credit ready. The project

manager has also developed significant relationships with key stakeholders such as the Department for Work and Pensions, Housing Management, Benefit Services and worked closely with other housing organisations in order to learn from successes. Processes, from pre-letting through to rent debt management, are being reviewed and redesigned to ensure the needs of our tenants are supported, which aims to help them take responsibility for their personal finances.

- The Service has conducted a review of key contact centre processes and as a result will be implementing automation within some of the administrative tasks, such as processing document requests from customers. This will increase the time staff are available to answer telephone calls.
- The Rent Service successfully ran a campaign to contact all tenants affected by the changes to the Benefit Cap that took place in November 2016. Tenants affected by the changes were given additional support in managing their finances and where necessary sign-posted to the internal debt advice service.

Challenges for 2017-18

Universal Credit (for people of working age) disconnects tenants and the Rent Service from the familiar Housing Benefit administration system which has been in place for many years. This will bring fundamental change, at the centre of which is a new and as yet largely uncharted tenant/landlord relationship. Working age tenants will be paid the housing element of Universal Credit. Our purpose shifts from directing tenants on a low income to claim Housing Benefit to supporting and enabling tenants to improve their budgeting skills and to explain that rent is a priority debt for payment and to explain the financial advantages to them of finding paid work. In Birmingham, Universal Credit full service will take place during November and December 2017.

Priorities for 2017-18

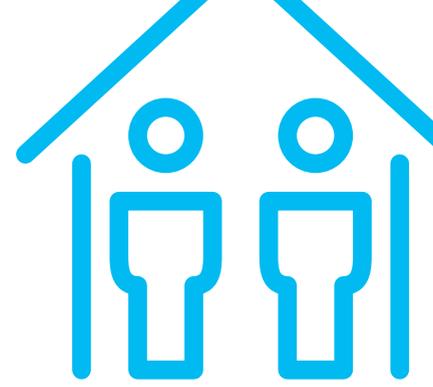
The 2017/18 priorities detailed below are inherently linked to UC migration with the aim to collect more rent through an improved cash collection rate. These are included in the Rent Service Business Plan.

- Implement the actions within the Rent Service Universal Credit Action Plan, the priorities include:
 - Service redesign.
 - Review of roles and responsibilities.
 - Resource allocation to match outputs.
 - Staff rewards.

- Implement the actions within the Rent Service Universal Credit Action plan. The priorities include:
 - Training - develop and implement training for rent staff which includes partners and stakeholders such as jobcentre work coaches and tenant groups.
 - Communication – inform tenants of key messages through tenant’s newsletters, rent statement, web content and review of letters to include key messages.
 - Partnership working - continue to develop key links with Department for Work and Pensions, Job Centres and third sector organisations.
 - Process redesign – develop and implement new processes where necessary which are aligned to Universal Credit.
 - Pilot support intervention to tenants who are moving on to UC to assist in enabling them to understand their responsibility in paying rent under the new system.
- Implementation of payment method strategy by giving tenants greater choice in making payments through:
 - Improved efficiencies through automation created in the Direct Debit processes.
 - Increase the number of Direct Debit dates to any day monthly Direct Debit.
 - Introduction of barcodes as a payment solution for tenants.
 - Introduction of pingit as a payment solution for tenants.
 - Review and assessment of affordable payment options that includes credit union accounts, squirrel and mobile payment options.
 - Review and assessment of doorstep payment method options.
 - Work with credit unions to pilot a tenant account that will assist tenants on UC with budgeting and paying rent.
- Review of all letters which includes wording and template changes that are consistent with findings related to customer behaviour and to encourage tenants to make payment into housing accounts:
 - Review of Housing Benefit Overpayment recovery letters.
 - Review of Former Tenancy Debt recovery letters.
 - Review of all Rent escalation letters.

- Assessment of the impact of the enforcement of the Money Judgment Order Procedure in the recovery of Former Tenancy debt and the implementation of any resulting process changes.
- Reduction in wasted time through lean process reviews that includes:
 - Requests for ad hoc rent statements.
 - Requests for ad hoc documents.
- Review of all Rent Service letters and introduction of bulk printing for all fixed template documentation that do not require local changes in order to reduce wasted time and create efficiency and cost savings.
- Implement a cost effective text messaging solution that provides cashable and non-cashable benefits such as:
 - Arrangement SMS – this replaces the arrangement letter and provides a follow up reminder of payment start date and improves credit control.
- Review of all Rent Service letters and the introduction of a remote printing solution in order to reduce wasted time and create efficiency and costs savings in the production of documentation.
- LEAN review and update of all current policy and procedures in order to minimise wasted time and create process efficiencies and to enable compliance checking against the processes.

SECTION 4 – 'YOUR COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD'



Tenancy Management

As of 1 April 2016/17 Housing Management manage 61,730 secure tenancies with 4,400 new tenancies created and 2,940 introductory tenancies created.

The role of tenancy management includes:

- dealing with tenancy matters, such as tenants' right of succession.
- mutual exchange applications.
- introductory tenancy reviews.
- investigating abandoned properties.
- dealing with overgrown gardens.
- joint tenancies applications.
- dealing with unlawful occupiers.
- requests for written permissions.
- supporting action to tackle social housing fraud and enforcing tenancy breaches.

We have policies underpinning our tenancy management role, which we must comply with to ensure consistency and fairness in our service delivery.

Tenancy management is mainly delivered within the landlord and tenant relationship, as set out in the Council's Conditions of Tenancy. As the landlord we have obligations to manage our tenancies well such as letting properties quickly to those in need, tackling unlawful subletting and taking firm action against those who breach their conditions of tenancy. In turn, tenants also have responsibilities, such as paying their rent, not causing anti-social behaviour or damage to their property or allowing their gardens to become overgrown.

We do try to assist tenants to keep their tenancy conditions by making referrals to agencies who may support them. However if problems continue we may have to resort to taking legal action to stop the behaviour or end the tenancy.

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- We have updated our tenancy management policies and procedures and these will be available for viewing online shortly. They include for example, our policies when dealing with succession, unlawful occupation, abandoned properties, permission requests and enforcing tenancy breaches, such as untidy gardens.
- We have begun our review of the conditions of tenancy, including the tenants' handbook. We have involved tenant representatives and other stakeholders in the drafting of new clauses, which we will be consulting all tenants on during 2018.
- We have introduced a new model for the delivery of tenancy management services based on the creation of new working practices, policies and procedures underpinned by staff training. These improvements are expected to have a positive impact for tenants as we will be more responsive in dealing with tenancy issues and Anti -Social Behaviour. Our new model also creates teams consisting of family workers, domestic abuse officers and generic housing officers sharing skills and expertise to support tenants to sustain their tenancies.
- To support the continuous professional development of our staff we are working with the Chartered Institute of Housing to create an apprenticeship framework to upskill our housing officers and visiting staff to meet the changing needs of the housing service.
- We helped some 294 secure tenants who were looking for a mutual exchange to swap homes. If you are a council tenant you can register with swap and move. This is a free online service that lets you search for people who might want to swap homes – to find out more go to **www.swapandmove.co.uk**
- We reviewed 3,342 introductory tenancies in 2015/16 and 3,131 of these successfully completed their 12 month probationary period and became secure tenants. The small percentage who did not convert to secure tenancies was due to them breaking their tenancy conditions and enforcement action was taken.
- Tenants are now able to access online application forms such as requests for mutual exchanges, creating joint tenancies and permission requests, such as requests to take in a lodger (introductory tenancies).

- Warning letters were sent to over 4000 tenants where either the state of the property or garden was an issue demonstrating our commitment to tackling tenancy breaches of this type.
- To assist with the detection and prevention of social housing fraud, we have increased the number of staff trained in the use of data warehouse tools, and security scanning systems, to verify information provided to us relating to tenancy changes, such as rights of succession claims or requests for the creation of joint tenancies.
- We have worked with the Chartered Institute of Housing to introduce a Service Quality Tool which is assisting us to comply with our policies and procedures and quality standards through service audits. We are using this to improve our service delivery.
- We have updated our housing management systems to improve the recording and monitoring of our tenancy management cases.
- We have introduced a performance management framework to ensure we are meeting our service targets and standards.
- We worked with partners of the Birmingham Safeguarding Adult's Board to develop the Self Neglect Practice Guidance and Framework for responding to adults who self-neglect (including hoarding behaviour) in Birmingham. This provides guidance to our housing officers on approaches that tend to work best when dealing with the complex issue of hoarding behaviour. To find out more go to www.bsab.org

Priorities for 2017-18

- We will consult all tenants on proposals to review the conditions of tenancy during 2018.
- We will update the tenants' handbook and publish it online.
- We will publish our revised Tenancy Service Standards.
- We will implement our programme of staff training through an apprenticeship framework.
- We will respond to any regulations issued by central Government on the use of flexible tenancies introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

Annual Visits

In 2016/17 we continued to deliver a reduced programme of Annual Visits alongside the visits to assist those affected by Welfare Benefit reforms and the work to improve the appearance of how our Estates through the Street Scene service. The Welfare Benefit visits have allowed us to proactively support tenants affected by these changes and help them to sustain their tenancies. The Street Scene visits have enabled us to tackle issues of fly tipping and other issues that affect how our streets and estates look. Through a combination of education and enforcement we have been able to improve the overall appearance and character of our streets and estates.

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- Continued to deliver on the Annual Visiting programme, focusing on those properties we have not gained access to.
- Supported the Welfare Benefit reform and Street Scene agendas to educate and support our tenants.
- Continued to identify support needs and take action where tenancy breaches have been identified.

Priorities for 2017-18

- Implement the Service redesign proposals which will improve how we identify and then carry out Tenancy Visits (Intelligence led approach).
- Introduction of a new system of managing our visits (Job Manager).
- Continue to work in partnership with other Directorates to improve information sharing and reduce duplication of visits.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Key Achievements for 2016-17

Legal Actions

ASB Services have made a number of successful applications using the tools and powers made available under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, Policing & Crime Act 2009 and the Local Government Act 1972. Some particular highlights are:

- 63 Injunctions and Undertakings. This includes swiftly and robustly dealing with 26 breaches of those Orders and processing 7 committal proceedings.
- 4 new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) to add to the 7 which are already in place across the City.
- 14 suspended and outright Possession Orders.
- 1 Closure Order.

ASB Services have also supported West Midlands Police in their applications for a number of Criminal Behaviour Orders, particularly in the City Centre as well as a number of Closure Order applications for a range of serious and persistent ASB.

Highlight Cases

An injunction under Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972 was obtained by Birmingham City Council as part of the multi-agency 'Operation Wraithbane'. Working alongside West Midlands Police and the Central Motorway Policing Group (CPMG), this Order has been used to tackle street cruising, 'boy racers' and nuisance caused by off road bikers. From feedback received, it is clear that this City wide Injunction has made a real, notable difference in relation to the problems experienced. There have been 5 breaches of this Order to date. It has also assisted West Midlands Police to seize in excess of 65 nuisance bikes in the East of the City alone.

The North ASB team were instrumental in securing a Court undertaking against an individual who had been causing harassment, alarm and distress to neighbours for a number of years. This case was particularly challenging due to the types of behaviours involved, the emergence of counter allegations and the difficulties in securing the level of evidence required. By combining the efforts of a range of BCC departments and external partners, ASB Services were able to secure the Court undertaking which was later used to support the application of a Restraining Order which was granted by the Courts. This case received national publicity and was only achieved as a result of the hard work of ASB Services who led and coordinated the efforts of all partners.

The success of this case has ensured that the pressures placed on day to day policing as well as the ASB team has reduced dramatically and has brought about much needed respite to the residents who were so negatively affected.

The ASB team were able to gain control of a property in the North of Birmingham which was a focal point for persistent ASB, crime and nuisance. Although the tenant was in part responsible, the main perpetrators were individuals taking advantage of the tenant who was vulnerable. By way of a case conference involving key professionals, a decision was made to proceed with a Closure Order. However, by using this particular ASB legislation, the team were able to allow the tenant to remain at the property and ensure that others were excluded. This meant that the tenancy was stabilised and the ASB reduced significantly. As a result of this excellent, coordinated work, the vulnerable person has been effectively supported and safeguarded and the community has received much needed respite.

In January 2017, a Public Space Protection Order was introduced in the St George's area of Aston. This application was supported by West Midlands Police and was made in order to tackle a range of anti-social behaviour including intimidation, threats, violence, amplified music, drug and alcohol misuse and littering. A breach of a PSPO could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 or a fine of up to £1000 determined by the Courts. It is widely agreed that the limited breaches noted to date is largely due to the breach sanctions being a real deterrent. There remains a problem with some emerging gang issues in the area and ASB services will be working alongside West Midlands Police to determine what action can be taken in respect of this.

A Pan Birmingham Street Community Tasking process was introduced in 2016. This meeting was convened to tackle those within the Street Community who present the highest level of threat, risk or harm to themselves or others and who had repeatedly refused to engage with the offers made by support services.

The Tasking process which is led by the ASB team and supported by both statutory and commissioned services has both protected the most vulnerable and ensured that there are consequences to those who present a risk to others. As a direct result of Tasking:

- a number of entrenched rough sleepers have been assisted into long term, stable housing.
- the most vulnerable have been protected from harm.

A Public Space Protection Order is now in force in your area

The areas included in this order are shown on the map.

A Public Space Protection Order is now in place in the **St George's Park area**.

This Order is in force from **23 January 2017**.

1. Groups of three or more people engaging in anti-social activity that is likely to cause nuisance, harassment, alarm or distress. Including, but not limited to verbal abuse, foul and abusive language, violence, threat of violence or alcohol related violence. An authorised person can request that a group suspected of such behaviour disperse.
2. Consuming or having in their possession open cans, bottles or other unsealed containers containing alcohol.
3. Carrying out graffiti on any surface within the restricted area and having in their possession any items or materials that are likely to be used in graffiti related activity.
4. Playing loud music from stationary vehicles and causing a nuisance.
5. Loitering in communal areas including entrances, foyer areas and stairwells in either high rise or low rise residential buildings.
6. Urinating or defecating in any public space.

Penalty on breach
It is an offence to engage in any activity that you are prohibited from doing by this Order. Depending on the behaviour in question, the enforcing officer could decide that a Suspected Offence Ticket is appropriate. These can be issued by an Authorised Police Officer or an Authorised Council Officer. Birmingham City Council may deem that a fixed penalty notice (FPN) of up to £100 would be the most appropriate sanction and issue this. Should a Fixed Penalty Notice not be issued, West Midlands Police and Birmingham City Council may consider that further interventions are necessary to address the alleged behaviour.

Right to Appeal
In accordance with Section 66 of the Act, any interested person who wishes to challenge the validity of this Order may appeal to the High Court within six weeks from the date upon which this Order is made. For further details on this order please visit www.birminghamcsp.org.uk/orders

Birmingham City Council BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

- long term and prolific drug users have undergone treatment programmes and remain stable.
- in the most serious cases, Court Orders have been obtained to protect individuals and others from further harm.

This process received the highest level of recognition at the 2016 Chamberlain Awards by winning the 'Unique Contribution' award and due to its success, is currently being expanded further into the 'Street Homelessness Taskforce'.

PSPO Breach Process

In January 2017, working alongside West Midlands Police, ASB services successfully introduced a new process for managing breaches of Public Space Protection Order's (PSPO's). The process introduced a 'Suspected Offence' ticket which is issued by an Authorised Officer to those thought to be in breach of the Order. Details contained within the ticket, circumstances and previous compliance are assessed and a decision made as to whether a warning, Fixed Penalty Notice or a Summons to Court is issued. So far, 45 Suspected Offence tickets have been issued which has led to 40 formal warnings. There has only been one repeat offender which indicates that the enforcement approach to this type of Place Based ASB appears to be working.

The Community Trigger

ASB Services have considered 18 Community Trigger applications. Of those applications, 6 Trigger Panels have been convened. One Community Trigger was upheld and the lessons learnt have assisted ASB Services to re-evaluate and improve certain areas of delivery and most importantly, ensured a more suitable outcome for the victim.

Safeguarding and Vulnerability

This year, our Safer Neighbourhoods Managers have introduced Supporting Adults Panels (SAP's) across the City to support adults within the community who do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention but clearly require intervention. The meetings involve key partners convening, discussing referrals received and determining the best course of action. By using a specially designed case management system, cases are followed through until a suitable outcome, which best supports the individual is met. There have been over 100 referrals across the City so far and although still in the early stages of development, there have been some real successes. These include protecting a vulnerable adult from others who were taking advantage, assisting a prolific hoarder who was at risk due to their compulsive behaviour and supporting those with drugs and alcohol misuse issues. Partners include BCC Housing, Registered Provider's, West Midlands Police, Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, Regulatory Services and Children's Services and all feedback received to date has been extremely positive.

ASB Services are now a key partner at Complex Strategy Meetings facilitated by Child Protection and Review. Such meetings will often look at those at risk of, or responsible for the most serious of crimes such as child sexual exploitation, trafficking and abuse. Our attendance at these meetings has meant that alternative methods of safeguarding or control have been introduced by way of civil interventions such as Injunctions and Sexual Risk Orders. It has also improved the communication between BCC departments and external partners and most importantly, protected vulnerable young people from serious harm.

Youth Intervention

On the West & Central quadrant, the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnerships Manager assisted to introduce 4 youth outreach projects into key areas whereby residents had reported high levels of ASB. These outreach projects enabled providers to go out into communities and work alongside the Police and other partners to ensure that the most hard to reach young people were provided with diversion and intervention over the summer period and beyond. The analysis in relation to these areas indicates that the projects have reduced the ASB and made a notable difference to the young people, their families and the wider community. The Think Family programme has further supported this work with Think Family workers providing additional momentum to long term support to both the young people and their families to facilitate positive change, introduce sustainable stability and build resilience for the future.

Partnerships

ASB Services continue to fully engage in partnership working at both a local and pan Birmingham level. ASB Partnerships Managers continue to be responsible for the Safer Communities Groups across the City which look to bring about resolutions for community safety issues at a local level. Thematic priorities have been identified allowing for a more focussed approach to key issues. Through effective networking, targeted promotion of the process and achieving results, there is now much improved attendance across the City with previously absent partners such as Safer Travel and Health/Mental Health now in regular attendance.

In addition to the Street Community Tasking process which has been developed, ASB Services have also been instrumental in looking at the significant increase in domestic abuse amongst the street community. Using highly regarded academic research and working alongside key partners including the Public Protection Unit, a more robust response to the complex issue of domestic abuse amongst the street community is being developed. This developing process has already safeguarded a number of vulnerable individuals with complex needs and protected them from harm.

Training & Development

A number of multi-agency partnership training events have taken place over this year including training/awareness sessions relating to ASB process tools and powers used to tackle Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness, Mental Health First Aid, Honour Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation.

On the North of the City, the Local Community Safety Partnership has supported the training of a number of officers and volunteers to deliver the 'Freedom Programme' and has also delivered a domestic abuse perpetrator programme in partnership with Respect and Bristol University which is being used to rehabilitate and stop the cycle of behaviour via a range of tried and tested methods.

A number of 'Keep Safe' projects have also been delivered across the City which involves key Partners working with the community to reduce crime and environmental issues within a Neighbourhood.

Priorities for 2017-18

ASB Services are leading on the development of the Street Homelessness Taskforce. This will look at three key areas of work – 'Education', 'Engagement' and 'Enforcement' in an attempt to tackle the increasing issue of Street Homelessness and associated behaviours in the City. The Taskforce will consist of both engagement and enforcement officers and together, they will look to make a real difference to the most marginalised and vulnerable by developing an appropriate response to each individual and their circumstances. In line with the 'Engagement' strand of work, ASB services are assisting businesses and other key partners to develop an Alternative Giving Scheme which will allow members of the community to more meaningfully contribute to those who are homeless by making sure that the money is spent on support, engagement and facilitating long term, sustainable change.

In October 2017, Designated Public Place Orders will cease to exist and these will be replaced by PSPO's. ASB Services are working with Partners and other BCC departments to facilitate the switch to PSPO's where appropriate. ASB Services will continue to lead on all PSPO's applications made across the City.

ASB Services are assisting the Organised Crime and Gangs Team from West Midlands Police to tackle a range of emerging gang's issues across the City. More recently, ASB services have supported with a range of interventions on the South of the City under 'Operation SORA'. This has included developing legal files for Court, working with housing providers in relation to possession proceedings, supporting with safeguarding cases and successfully obtaining a PSPO for The Fold in Kings Norton to deal with place based ASB. We will

continue to support our partners to manage gangs as well as wider organised crime issues including child sexual exploitation, modern day slavery and trafficking over the next 12 months.

ASB Services will be seeking to support the response to unauthorised encampments and travellers.

We are currently working with the West Midlands Police Partnerships Team to further develop our Community Protection Notice (CPN) process so that we can make further use of this tool to tackle issues including fly tipping, problematic buskers, litter, unkempt gardens and graffiti.

Working with partners, we will continue to enhance our use of Restorative Justice and Mediation to tackle certain instances of ASB.

We are currently reviewing our partnership IT arrangements to ensure that it remains compliant with all relevant legislation and provides the best possible case management solution to the multi-agency work which we undertake. This system will also be used by the Street Homelessness Taskforce.

We will continue to engage with communities and ensure that voices are heard. A number of community and family day events are planned over the Summer with specific events being held across the Ladywood and Northfield Constituencies. An event focussing on domestic abuse is also planned in the North of the City in September.



Think Family Programme

Think Family is part of an overall shift in the way in which Housing Management responds to anti-social behaviour – the aim is to manage demand by having a real focus on early intervention and deterrence as opposed to enforcement. The Think Family workers have continued to play an integral part in ASB Service delivery and resolving ASB at a local level. Their early intervention and support mechanisms have supported families to develop strategies to facilitate long term, sustainable change. The Family Workers form a vital link to the Early Help and Safeguarding Team as well as the statutory safeguarding provisions.

Key Achievements 2016-17

Birmingham City Council continued in 2016 to provide Think Family support through Phase Two of the National Think (Troubled) Family Programme. The City's target is to support 14,300 families over a five year period from 2015-2020.

The Programme continues to use six characteristics (see table below) to identify a 'think family' and to qualify for support a family's needs/problems must include at least two of the six outlined. As a result support can now be requested for families with multiple problems who meet the definition of 'additional needs' or 'significant and complex needs'.

Think Family Support

1. Parents/children involved in crime/ASB.
2. Children not attending school regularly.
3. Children who need help.
4. Adults out of work/risk of financial exclusion YP at risk of worklessness.
5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.
6. Parents/children with a range of health problems.

- During 2016/17 new Early Help Assessment tools were developed to assist Family Workers when working with families to ensure they were receiving the right support and to focus on empowering families to make positive changes in their own lives. Workers were able to help families identify what is working well for them, what they are worried about and the impact for all of the individuals in the home.
- Early Help Panels were established in September 2016 in five areas of the City. These were designed to give local practitioners the opportunity to discuss cases, identify blockages and agree solutions. Housing staff are members of the panel and share their expertise and knowledge to support families through a multi-agency approach.

- A new case management system was implemented in September 2016 enabling the service to better analyse data.
- Think Family Workers supported 368 families.

Priorities for 2017-18

- The service will continue to focus on identifying family problems at an early stage, rather than reacting when these escalate, causing a greater impact on the community as a whole.
- The service will continue to work with those families in greatest need with multiple problems.

The Night Security Service

The Night Security Service has now successfully been operating for 2 years. It provides a 24/7 service 365 days a year and is the only service within Housing Management that operates these hours.

It consists of Control Room Operatives who work day and night dealing with callers at 96 low and high rise blocks in the City, Mobile Patrol Officers and Night Time Security Supervisors who work between the hours of 19.00pm – 07.00am each night.

The Service has continued to be well received by both its customers and local teams as well as its partners, like Repairs contractors, Police and Emergency Services. All officers continue to work very well together on priority areas and programmes.

Key Achievements 2016-17

- Mobile Patrol Officers have continued to provide patrols and conduct block patrols ensuring that any repairs required have been reported and completed.
- Control Room Operatives have been successful in providing a very valuable service to its customers particularly vulnerable and elderly customers, ensuring that they have a safe and secure home.
- The Night Security Team has successfully dealt with Anti-Social Behaviour issues and provided the local teams with great assistance in resolving these issues as well as dealing with some major emergency situations in its tower blocks such as no water supply and major flooding where residents had to be evacuated during the night.

- One of the Mobile Patrol Officers Teams was crucial in responding to a report of a very young child that had gone missing. The Team were first on the scene and managed to find the child within 30 minutes.
- The Night Security Team has identified some residents who need specific support and referred them to the appropriate support services.
- The enhanced service continues to be delivered at a cost of £9.62 per week – a much reduced cost from 2 years ago.
- In the last 12 months the Night Security Team has successfully worked very closely with the local Teams and Police in dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour.

Priorities for 2017-18

- Continue to evaluate and review how the Mobile Security Patrol Service operates.
- Improve how we record and monitor the service.
- Introduce a Customer Charter which will provide details of what our customers can expect from the Night Security Service.
- Continue to work with local Teams and Birmingham City Council partners to make further improvements to the Service.



Quadrant Hubs

The Hubs provide front-line customer service support for our customers through a number of functions which includes advice, signposting and directly resolving customers issues and concerns.

Key Achievements 2016 – 2017

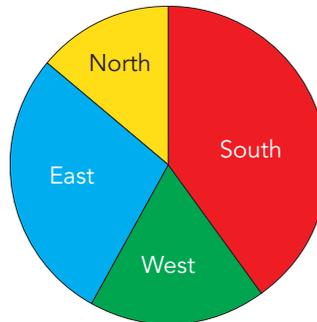
- We successfully implemented a Performance Management Tool for all Customer Service Hub staff which has led to improvements in the quality of service delivered to customers.
- We introduced a Customer Service Triage Process to assist with resolving customer enquiries at the first point of contact.
- 104,660, calls were taken by the Hubs. A breakdown of this by Quadrant is as follows:

South: 42,040

West: 18,979

East: 29,269

North: 14,372



- The West Customer Service Hub was the best performing in terms of answering calls, taking on average 16 seconds to answer.
- The South Quadrant Customer Service Hub took the highest number of calls at 42,040.
- Citywide, we answered 96.7% of all calls made to us, taking an average 28 seconds to answer each call.
- We continued to sustain the improvements made in 2015/2016 on the number of 'Your Views' enquiries responded to within 15 days from 95% (Year End 2016) to 95.3% (Year End 2017).

Priorities for 2017-18

- We have now finalised, and in consultation with staff and residents, will introduce our 'Customer Charter' which clearly outlines what you can expect from our Customer Services Hubs.
- To implement the redesign of the Housing Management Customer Service Hubs and introduce a more consistent, efficient and effective front line service to our tenants and reduce demand placed on the tenancy management and ASB service.

- To continue to promote and support 'channel-shift' by directing enquiries through self- service online systems in order to reduce costs and increase capacity to deliver a more proactive customer service function.
- Introduce an easily accessible and improved Customer Satisfaction process for all our customers and ensure comments and feedback are monitored and used to improve our service.
- Implement a training and development plan for all Customer Service Hub staff to ensure service improvements are delivered consistently Citywide.

Services for Older People

Sheltered and Extra Care Housing Schemes provide support to their residents to help them live independently for longer. Birmingham City Council runs 126 sheltered housing schemes for older and more vulnerable people across the City. We also manage four extra care schemes and there are a number of others that are managed by Registered Social Landlords.

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- Consultation on new service redesign completed with all sheltered housing tenants.
- New service model approved by Cabinet.
- Transfer of Tele Care connections to our Care Line (app 2100 connections) Tele care alarms are either funded by Adult Social care if an individual is in receipt of a care package or by the individual themselves. There is no additional cost to the HRA. Tele care equipment includes Fall Detectors, Wandering alerts, Flood detectors. The equipment is designed to support someone to remain living independently in their own home.
- Care Line Team are now providing Tele Care services.

Key priorities for 2017-18

- Implement the new sheltered housing service model.
- Continue with the sheltered housing high rise stock review to support the Department in trying to make the best use of its stock.
- Update our policies and procedures and launch the new sheltered housing handbook to support the new service model.
- Ensure that our staff are fully trained on the new service.

Street Scene

Cleaner, greener strategies are an important feature in improving the neighbourhoods of Birmingham. Cleaner, greener neighbourhoods enhance the quality of life for our residents, in turn creating pride in the places where they live, which is essential to building community cohesion and successful inclusive communities.

Key Achievements for 2016-17

- We have established a team of Street Scene visiting officers working in our housing neighbourhoods across the City who have carried out many visits to locations and residents during the year. They engage with communities on how best to keep the local environment clean and tidy. They also educate residents on recycling and their responsibilities for disposing of rubbish appropriately to maintain the cleanliness and appearance of neighbourhoods.
- The Street Scene visiting officers investigate instances of rubbish dumping and fly tipping. Our teams actively challenge negative behaviour with positive results being achieved most of the time. Where offences are serious and offenders identified, we look to take action in partnership with Regulation and Enforcement colleagues. This has resulted in some prosecutions and the issuing of fines during the year.
- In a partnership programme with Regulation and Enforcement colleagues, 180 communal sites (including accessways and drying areas) that were identified as being blighted were attended to and cleared of rubbish and debris. The amount of rubbish disposed of from these sites was 363 tonnes.
- At many of the sites referred to above, we consulted with local residents on their responsibility for keeping these areas clean, tidy and well maintained. With this in mind, many sites were only cleared on the understanding that residents would maintain them in the future and to support this some 400 residents have signed up to Good Neighbour Agreements giving a commitment to doing this.
- In April 2016 we introduced locally based teams to remove dumped rubbish/fly tipped waste and to carry out other environmental works in Housing neighbourhoods. During 2016 these teams collected and disposed of 2,014 tonnes of dumped waste from Housing land.

Birmingham City Council **cleaner greener streets**

Good Neighbour Agreement

With _____

Birmingham City Council is committed to ensuring a clean green and safe City. We want to inspire and encourage all our residents to also play their part.

We expect our residents to have respect for their homes, their neighbours and their environment; to take pride in the places and neighbourhoods where they live and to also take ownership of the issues raised below.

We know that where this happens and residents are more involved that we are more likely to have sustainable communities.

To encourage this, we would like you to sign the Good Neighbour Agreement as an indication that you are committed to working collectively with your neighbours and partners in making your neighbourhood a safe clean and happier place to live.

So what does it mean to be a good neighbour?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What we will do:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Data Protection Act 1998
We will keep the personal information you give us on this form safe. Your information is protected by law. This means that:

- we only share it with people who need to see it.
- we only keep it for as long as we have to and
- you have the right to see the information we hold about you.

page 1 of 2

- Once again many activities were carried out with Housing Liaison Boards/ members, residents and community groups that helped improve the local environment including community litter picking and clear up events. A great example is the 'All out Clear Up' days held on the 9th November 2016. These events took place at a number of locations and resulted in some 35 tonnes of waste being picked up and disposed of. Housing teams, HLB members and tenants were involved in many of these events along with other BCC colleagues, partner agencies, community groups and residents. As well as this during March 2017, housing teams, HLB members and tenants working with other BCC colleagues, various partner agencies, community groups and residents, made a vital contribution to many of the 127 clean up events that took place in all 40 wards across the City for the 'Great British Spring Clean'. Around 3,000 people participated in these events and 63 tonnes of waste was collected and disposed of.
- Our existing cleaning contracts for some 644 low rise blocks have been extended to run until March 2018.
- The 2016 Birmingham in Bloom competition included the Street Scene category of 'Making a Positive Contribution to the Environment'. This gave us the opportunity to recognise and thank those who had made a positive contribution to improving the local environment.

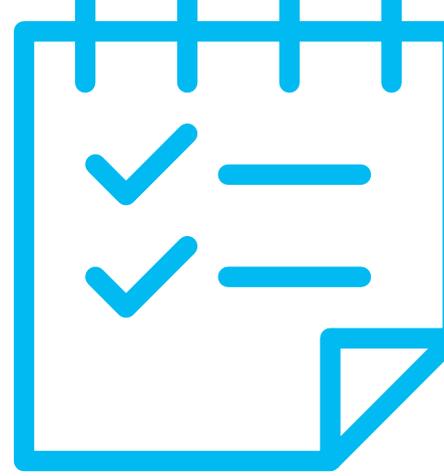
Priorities for 2017-18

- Locally based teams will be in place to remove fly tipped waste, carry out work that improves the appearance of our neighbourhoods and tackle environmental 'grot spots' with the co-operation of local residents.
- We will continue to engage and work with residents on how best to keep the local environment clean and tidy. We will support those who want to make a positive difference and encourage recycling and waste reduction.
- We will investigate instances of 'fly tipping' and challenge negative behaviour. We will look to take enforcement action where we can and where it is appropriate to do so.
- We will assist tenants living in high rise accommodation that need support to access the BCC chargeable bulky waste collection service. This is important as we appreciate residents who care about the cleanliness and appearance of the local environment and look to properly dispose of their waste.
- We will be procuring new contracts for the cleaning of communal areas for around 650 low rise blocks. Tenant representatives will be assisting us with assessing the contractors' bids for the work and who the work is awarded to.

- To support training and employment opportunities for our residents we will be offering 32 apprenticeship positions for people to work in neighbourhoods on environmental cleansing. Those who successfully complete the apprenticeship will gain a level 2 qualification in Facilities Services and be taken on as direct employees of BCC.
- Following the success of last year's Birmingham in Bloom we have incorporated the following Cleaner, Greener categories in recognition of those who make a positive difference to the environment/community:
 - Cleaner Green Community Award (HLB's, Resident Groups, Schools, who have made a difference to the community).
 - Young Person/Group Award (Schools, Scouts, Brownies who have contributed to making a difference to the community).
 - Helping Hand (Nominating a tenant/leaseholder who has contributed to their neighbourhood in making an outstanding difference).



SECTION 5 - VALUE FOR MONEY



Strategic Overview and Context of Financial Pressures on the HRA

The HRA is under considerable service and financial pressure to reflect national and local policy changes and in particular the following issues are highlighted:

- Impact of the Welfare Benefit reforms and the introduction of the Universal Credit – research conducted by the Association of Retained Local Authorities indicated that rent arrears increased in those areas where Universal Credit has been introduced by an average of 16% in the first quarter following implementation. As direct payment of housing benefit to recipients is introduced, this is likely to increase substantially. In excess of 70% of the Council's HRA tenants are currently in receipt of housing benefit. Therefore the impact of this transition in Birmingham is likely to be significant as the transition from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit continues.
- The impact of the revised national rent policy (rent reductions of 1% per annum between 2016/17 and 2019/20) is estimated to result in a loss of HRA income increasing to approximately £42m per annum by 2019/20.
- The future impacts of the proposed government policy for introducing a tariff relating to high value void dwellings (likely to be implemented from 2018) is not yet known, but early estimates are that this might equate to a cost to the HRA of in excess of £5m per annum once implemented.

In addition, there are statutory requirements to ensure that there is no cross-subsidy between the HRA and General Fund services (the "who benefits" principle – designed to ensure that Council tenants do not pay twice for the same service, through both Council Tax and Rents), that an annual balanced budget is set and that the service is sustainable and affordable in the long run based on the HRA Self-Financing Framework.

Key Outcomes and Strategic Housing Service Objectives

The HRA Business Plan 2017+ is intended to support the following key strategic and housing service objectives:

Building New Homes and Maintaining Stock

- Provision of new affordable housing to replace obsolete properties and provide a significant contribution to the Housing Growth Strategy (2,570 new council homes over the next ten years with an associated investment of £379m).
- Maintaining properties in their current improved condition (to ensure that the properties are not impaired) with an investment of £585m over the next ten years.
- Life-cycle replacement of property components (windows, heating, kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, electrical components).
- Discharge of statutory day to day repairs and maintenance obligations (including compliance with health and safety on annual gas inspections) with investment of £669m over the next ten years.
- Adaptations to properties to continue to promote independent living (an investment of £37m over the next ten years).

Local Housing and Estate Services

- Continued modernisation of the delivery of local housing management services (e.g. annual visits, review and more rigorous enforcement of tenancy conditions, in particular anti-social behaviour).
- Implementation of a revised operating model for sheltered housing services, aligned to a revised charging structure to minimise residual costs borne by the HRA. The details of the revised approach were set out in a Cabinet Report considered on 24 January 2017.
- An ongoing review of other estate based services that are subject to service charges (including caretaking and cleaning), with any resulting service redesigns and revisions to service charges to be delivered during 2017/18 and 2018/19 to ensure that changes in service provision to tenants are phased in over a suitable time period with appropriate consultation built into implementation plans. These service reviews are designed to ensure that the services are delivered efficiently and offer good value for money to the tenants in receipt of the services, whilst ensuring that they are not cross-subsidised by other tenants not receiving the services

- Improving performance on rent collection and empty properties.
- Secure efficiencies in Business Support Services to ensure that scarce resources are not unnecessarily diverted away from front line service delivery and investment priorities.

Rent Policy

- To ensure that the rent policy is consistent with the revised national rent policy (rents will further reduce by 1% in 2017/18 with additional 1% reductions for the next two years, followed by increases of CPI +1% for subsequent years).
- To ensure that service charges are set at a level that reflects the costs of service delivery, whilst ensuring value for money for tenants and ensuring that charges are eligible for support through housing benefit wherever possible.

How have we made the most of our resources in 2016-17

Summary of Outturn - Key Financial Highlights

The key financial highlights are set out below:

- there was a small underspend of £0.043m (less than one tenth of one percent of the total HRA expenditure in the year) on the HRA compared to the forecast balanced position (after taking into account additional repayment of debt £2.9m from revenue balances). The debt now outstanding on the HRA is £1.122 billion.

The major variations during the year included:

- Lower than budgeted expenditure on repairs to Council dwellings, due to lower than budgeted performance related payments to contractors following the letting of new contracts effective from 1 April 2016.
- Increased local housing management costs, primarily as a result of a realignment of recharges from the General Fund (£2.000m).
- Reduced Estate Services costs, substantially due to a significant number of vacancies not filled as service redesigns are progressed.
- Higher than anticipated costs in relation to equal pay liabilities paid in year as settlements slipped from prior years.

A debt repayment provision of £2.887m was undertaken for 2016/17. Taken together with new borrowing of £10.250m as a part of the Local Growth Fund (funding new build council housing, as referred to above) and short term borrowing to fund new build housing for market sale of £11.769m, this will increase total HRA borrowing to £1.122bn at the year-end. This compares to a borrowing cap of £1.150bn. This strategy is considered the most financially efficient option for the HRA and maximises its capital financing flexibility. This also affords a future option for further new borrowing in the future at lower rates if this is necessary to support the capital expenditure programme.

Key Service Highlights for 2016/17

The following service achievements for 2016/17 should be noted:

Investment

- handover of a further 208 new affordable homes under the BMHT programme.
- completion of the programme for the replacement of windows, heating systems.
- rewires to continue the on-going maintenance of properties.
- External funding of £1.408m secured including DCLG (£0.154m) and grants from the Homes and Communities Agency (£0.956m).

Repairs Service

- the annual gas servicing programme was completed for all properties.
- emergency repairs were completed in line with agreed timescales.
- all responsive and right to repair jobs were undertaken or issued to repairs. Contractors for completion in line with agreed timescales.
- all empty properties requiring repairs (where the property is to be re-let) were completed or issued to repairs contractors for completion in line with agreed timescales.
- commencement of new integrated contracts for Repairs, Gas Servicing and Capital investment in retained HRA properties from 1 April 2016 for a minimum period of 4 years, generating savings to the HRA compared to previous contracts of a minimum of £13million over the next 4 years.

Local Housing and Estate Services

- year-end current tenants arrears of £12.277m (or 4.4% of the total rent due) in line with the target.
- delivery of key local estate services – concierges, caretaking, older people accommodation.
- Continuation of a low level of voids (531 at 31 March 2017 – equivalent to 0.8% of total dwellings) compared to a budget forecast of 700 properties.

Equal Pay Costs

- A total of £10.607m for Equal Pay payments were made during 2016/17 for all HRA funded staff, with future costs (including taxation liabilities) anticipated to amount to a further £3.816m. These costs are being funded in their entirety from revenue resources generated from a combination of efficiency savings in service delivery and re-phasing of self-financing debt repayments.

Key Indicators

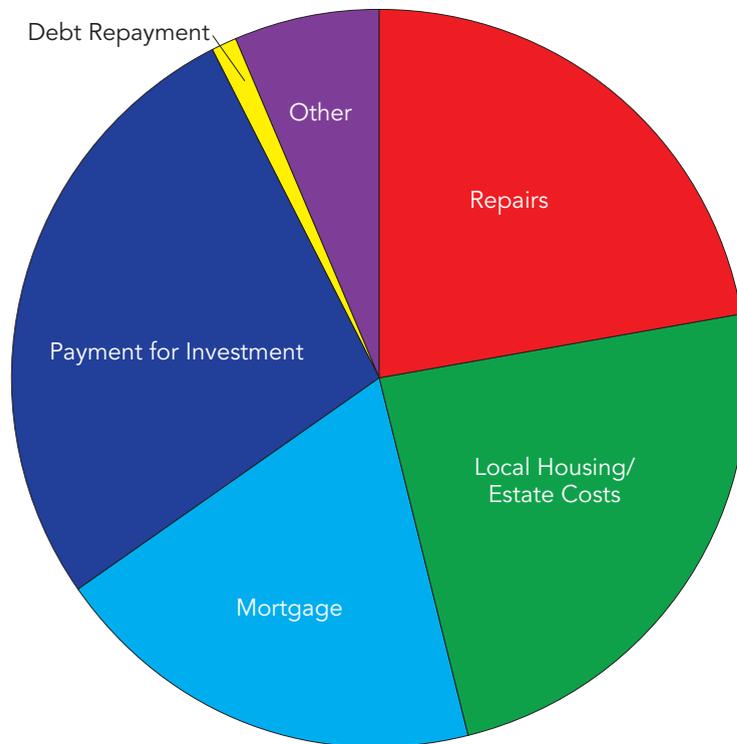
	Original Budget 2016/17	Outturn 2016/17	Variation
Property Numbers			
Sales	400	632	232
Demolitions	153	186	33
New Build – BMHT	347	208	(139)
Average Property Numbers	62,543	62,246	(297)
Void Loss			
Void Properties	700	560	(140)
Average Rent Void Properties (52 week) (NB includes service charges)	£98.90	£83.20	(£15.70)
Rent levels			
Per Week (48 week)	£88.57	£88.79	£0.22
Per Week (52 week equivalent)	£81.78	£81.98	£0.20
Arrears			
Current Tenant Arrears	£13.8m	£12.3m	(£1.5m)
Current Housing Benefit Overpayment	£12.6m	£13.3m	£0.7m
Former Tenant Arrears	£2.0m	£1.9m	(£0.1m)
Former Housing Benefit Overpayment	£0.6m	£1.5m	£0.9m

How will we do better from 2017/18 onwards?

- Modernise the delivery of local housing management services (annual visits and enforcement of tenancy conditions, in particular anti-social behaviour).
- An ongoing review of other estate based services that are subject to service charges (including caretaking, cleaning and sheltered housing services, with any resulting service redesigns and revisions to service charges to be delivered in 2016/17 and 2017/18. These service reviews are designed to ensure that the services are efficiently delivered and offer good value for money to the tenants in receipt of the services, whilst ensuring that they are not cross subsidised from other tenants not receiving the services.
- Continued improvement of works to properties through the Repairs and Investment contracts, which were let in April 2016. This improvement will come through the integrated provision of day to day repairs and investment works, and greater partnership working with the contractors.

Breakdown of how your weekly rent is spent

	Budget 2016/17 £ per week	Actual 2016/17 £ per week	Change	% age
Repairs	£19.31	£18.24	(£1.07)	(5.5%)
Local Housing/Estate Costs	£18.80	£19.70	£0.90	4.8%
Mortgage	£15.76	£15.77	£0.01	0.1%
Payment for Investment	£22.83	£22.28	(£0.55)	(2.4%)
Debt Repayment	£0.34	£0.85	£0.51	150.0%
Other (Voids, Arrears and historic pay liabilities)	£4.74	£5.14	£0.40	8.4%
Total	£81.78	£81.98	£0.20	0.2%



Weekly Rent Actual Spend 2016/17

How to give us your views

We would like you to tell us what you think of our services. It's always useful for us to hear about when things have gone right – and when they've gone wrong. There are a number of ways in which you can give us your comments, complaints or compliments about any aspect of the housing service. Visit the website at www.birmingham.gov.uk/yourviews

Annual Report to Tenants

We would really appreciate your feedback on the Annual Report by going to www.birmingham.gov.uk/residentinvolvement and making a comment. Your views will be very useful to us when we are producing future reports.





72.81

A great city to live in