



HELLO



This report mainly covers the 12-month period up to the end of March 2020, just a week after the country went into lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of government restrictions, over the last few months we have made several changes to how we operate in order to keep you safe and continue delivering our services. Many of these changes have made better use of digital technology.

Over the last year we had already started to make changes to improve the customer experience, and many of the new changes were in our plans but were brought forward due to the circumstances. We have continued to provide our mobile Housing & Neighbourhoods team with the technology to better serve you in the community, and I am particularly pleased to see that over half of you are now registered for myhomeonline, compared to around a quarter last year.

All these changes mean that there is now more cross-team working, providing swifter decision-making and responses. This one team approach is reflected in this report, gathering our performances over the past year by the regulatory standards rather than by service area as we feel this better represents how all our services are interlinked and support each other.

There are clearly areas where can improve, but the data and your feedback – complaints, compliments, resident involvement, and satisfaction levels – will help us focus our resources on the areas that need attention. By signing up to the *Together with Tenants* charter, we have also ensured that there are many opportunities for residents' voices to be heard at every level.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to our involved residents for their dedication and invaluable input to addressing the issues that matter to you.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Chris".

Christine Ashton

Executive Director - Housing

1 YOUR HOME	2 YOUR TENANCY	3 TENANT INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT	4 NEIGHBOURHOOD & COMMUNITY	5 WHERE YOUR MONEY & COMMUNITY IS SPENT	6 CUSTOMER SERVICES	HOME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME 6 GREEN ENERGY 7 RESPONSIVE REPAIRS 8 GAS SAFETY 9 AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS 10 KEEPING YOU SAFE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 TACKLING HOMELESSNESS 13 INFLUENCING MPs AND COUNCILLORS 14 FUNDRAISING 15 BUILDING MORE HOMES 16 WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNERS 16 TENANCY SUSTAINMENT 16 REDUCING EVICTIONS 17 VOIDS 18 MONEY MATTERS 19 HELPING PEOPLE INTO WORK 20 RECOGNISING SUCCESS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 TOGETHER WITH TENANTS 28 INVOLVED RESIDENTS 30 NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR INVOLVING RESIDENTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 CLEAN AND CLEAR NEIGHBOURHOODS 33 REPAIRS IN COMMUNAL AREAS 33 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35 INCOME SPENT ON HOMES AND SERVICES 36 HOW YOUR SERVICE CHARGE IS SPENT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38 HOW YOU REACH US 39 CONTACT US 	

To make it easier for you to read, this report is interactive. If you are reading on a computer click the headings above to jump directly to the page you wish to read.

You can click 'Home' at any time to jump back to this page.

THE STANDARDS

The Regulator of Social Housing has four standards that we as a landlord need to meet. The standards are long-established, and every year we strive to not only exceed them, but to go beyond our previous performances and satisfaction levels.

The full standards can be found [here](#).

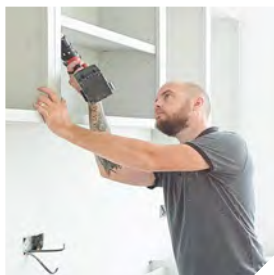
YOUR HOME

This standard covers the upkeep of your home, the measures we take to keep you safe, and any adaptations we may make to keep you independent. It also includes work we carry out to bring empty properties up to lettable standard.



LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME

During the year we undertook a range of programmes to improve the quality of our homes, and to keep you safe and comfortable. The nature of these programmes can vary from year to year and are based on a rota of inspections.



Planned maintenance

2019-20: £9.0m ↑

2018-19: £8.8m



Key: 2019-20 ■ 2018-19 ■

On replacing: Heating systems/ boilers

2019-20: 385 ↓

2018-19: 545



Kitchens with electrical upgrade

2019-20: 471 ↑

2018-19: 408



Fascia/soffits

2019-20: 24 ↓

2018-19: 103



Roofs

2019-20: 114 ↓

2018-19: 147



Bathrooms

2019-20: 194 ↑

2018-19: 22



Windows/Doors

2019-20: 171

2018-19: N/A

Properties painted

2019-20: 1,607 ↓

2018-19: 2,504



Door entry systems and communal doors upgraded

2019-20: 41 ↑

2018-19: 27



GREEN ENERGY

Our five-year programme for installing energy-efficient air source heat pumps has led to us being named Housing Association/Landlord of the Year at the East Midlands Energy Efficiency Awards.

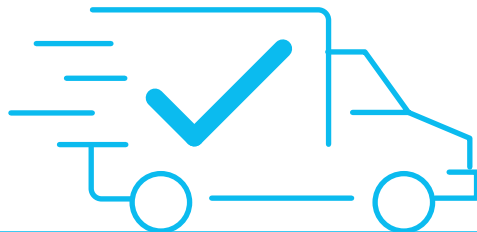
We were also commended in the *Vulnerable Customer Support* category. The awards celebrate the outstanding work carried out by businesses across the region in implementing energy efficiency schemes.

The installation programme is part of our commitment to tackling fuel poverty and the environmental crisis. The pumps absorb heat from the air outside, which is then used to heat radiators and provide hot water. They are a highly efficient and green way of heating homes and much cheaper for residents. We also offer support after installation, including advice on the right tariff for maximum efficiency.



RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

To address some of your feedback, during the year we refined the reporting lines within Property Services. Previously, our teams had the dual role of preparing our empty properties for reletting and carrying out repairs, which at times created a conflict of priorities. These roles have now been separated, allowing each team to concentrate all their energies on one specialised area of operation.



Responsive repairs completed

2019-20: 34,631 ▲
2018-19: 33,122



On time

2019-20: 85% ▼
2018-19: 90%



Customer satisfaction

2019-20: 96% ▲
2018-19: 95%



GAS SAFETY

At the start of 2019 we introduced a new way of working which enabled us to ensure that almost every one of our homes with a gas appliance has a valid safety certificate.



Our new approach includes working closely with our gas contractor, Liberty, and mapping out the visits needed each month, where necessary bringing some forward to avoid peaks and troughs in demand. The team has also strengthened its links with Housing & Neighbourhoods, sharing insights into why some tenants might not be letting us in and how we can work together to improve access.

We have also become more flexible by offering ad hoc evening or Saturday morning appointments if a customer has a full-time job or caring responsibilities.

Properties with a valid Gas Safety certificate

2019-20: 99.96% ↑


2018-19: 99.80%



AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS

We understand the importance of being able to remain independent and safe in your own home when you start to struggle with mobility.

Every year we set aside a budget to make life a bit easier for some residents by making an adjustment to their home. This could be minor works such as grab rails for the bath or a temporary ramp for a wheelchair. For major adaptations such as a level-access shower or kitchen alterations we can fund up to 50% in partnership with the local authority, who contribute the remaining cost through a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Aids and adaptations installed
2019-20: 617, at a cost
of £489k 
 2018-19: 821, at a cost
 of £345k



KEEPING YOU SAFE

Our safety inspections follow a regular cycle, which is why there may be marked differences in figures from the previous year. Please be reassured, however, that we follow all the relevant safety standards.



Fire risk assessments

2019-20: 216 ↓

2018-19: 521



Surveys for asbestos-containing materials (ACM) on new dwellings

2019-20: 111 ↓

2018-19: 185



Surveys for ACM on communal areas

2019-20: 163 ↑

2018-19: 78



Re-inspection of homes at medium risk of having ACM

2019-20: 8 ↓

2018-19: 13



Re-inspection of communal areas with ACM

2019-20: 934 ↑

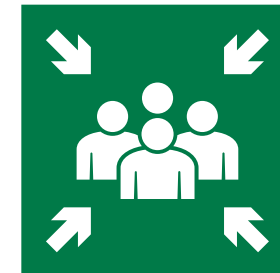
2018-19: 2



Properties that have had ACM removed

2019-20: 627 ↓

2018-19: 628



YOUR TENANCY

This standard covers how we address the housing needs of our local authority partners, and the services we provide to support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.



TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is one of the most devastating symptoms of the national housing crisis.



Local authorities have a legal obligation to take steps to both prevent and relieve homelessness, but from the evidence on our streets it is obvious that legislation alone is not enough. What is needed is a network of specialist providers delivering a range of solutions tackling every aspect of the crisis.

The key areas where we believe we can have the most impact in helping to prevent and relieve homelessness include:

Lobbying

- ▶ Supporting national campaigns
- ▶ Raising awareness with local MPs and councillors
- ▶ Fundraising for local homelessness charities

Prevention

- ▶ Carrying out risk assessments and providing a support referral framework for all new tenants
- ▶ Providing money advice services to our tenants to support them in sustaining their tenancy
- ▶ Building new homes

Signposting

- ▶ Providing information about national and local organisations that provide specialist advice and support services to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless

INFLUENCING MPS AND COUNCILLORS

Over the years we have established strong relationships with local MPs and councillors across the region, showing them around our homes, demonstrating how we are tackling the housing crisis, and how we contribute to the local economy.

Local MP Maggie Throup and the Leader of Erewash Borough Council Carol Hart joined us in welcoming residents to their new homes in Ilkeston.

The development of 85 homes – 55 for rent, 10 for rent-to-buy, and 20 for sale on a shared ownership basis – is one of our largest and most ambitious to date. It also made use of several local sub-contractors and offered apprenticeship opportunities to four local young people.

Our Head of Housing & Neighbourhoods Laura Morgan showed Andrew Lewer – MP for Northampton South – around some of our homes in his constituency, chatting to residents about local priorities, and being a good neighbour and creating a sense of community.



FUNDRAISING

In April 2019 more than 20 members of our team took part in the Long Eaton Sleep Out, raising over £1,000 for the Canaan Trust, a local homeless charity.

In January 2020, a couple of colleagues took part in a sleep-out in Northampton to raise funds for the Hope Centre.



Later in the year we donated over £2,000 each to the Canaan Trust and Leicester-based Action Homeless after receiving a windfall from EEM, a non-profit organisation that we used to secure contracts for flooring and air source heat pumps.



BUILDING MORE HOMES

In September 2019 emh group secured a further £12.9m as part of its strategic partnership with Homes England, the government housebuilding agency. When it was first appointed a partner the previous year, the group was given access to £30.5m to provide high-quality affordable homes over a four-year period.

This £43.4m means that emh group has been able to increase its development programme and will deliver 2,400 new homes by 2023.

New homes built by emh group

2019-20: 468 ▲

[281 rental properties for emh homes + 187 low cost home ownership properties for Hello Homes]

2018-19: 400

[257 rental properties for emh homes + 143 low cost home ownership properties for Hello Homes]



New homes in the pipeline that will be completed in the next two years

2019-20: 1,048 ▼

2018-19: 1,069



New homes sold by Hello Homes

2019-20: 141 ▲

2018-19: 57



Key: 2019-20 ■ 2018-19 ■



WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNERS

We work in partnership with Erewash Borough Council and Blaby District Council, where together more than half of our properties are located, to address homelessness in the areas. These partnerships include having agreements in place for temporary accommodation, which have proved very effective in quickly providing a safe place for some of the most vulnerable people.



TENANCY SUSTAINMENT

To reduce the risk of tenancies failing, we carry out a pre-tenancy sustainability assessment for every new tenant. Where necessary, we put in place a support referral framework to support the tenant. The framework includes support from our Financial Inclusion team and local money advice services.

REDUCING EVICTIONS

It is a breach of the tenancy agreement to not pay rent, but our dedicated team can support those tenants willing to work with us to change their behaviours and help them keep their home. Eviction is always our last resort.

Every eviction contributes to homelessness, which is why we were committed to reducing the number of tenancies we ended compared with last year. This was achieved through the dedication of the Income team, reducing the figure from 50 last year to 39 this year, and we will continue to direct our resources to try and reduce that figure further next year.

Thanks to our work with local authorities and our Financial Inclusion team securing extra income for residents in debt, we are supporting people to pay their rent regularly and prevent arrears building. The effectiveness of our approach is reflected in the increased number of residents we helped last year, and the level of eligible benefits that we were able to secure.

VOIDS

The average cost of relets increased due to a change in the way we delivered repairs, including to empty properties, during the year. Our priority is to turn voids around as quickly as possible, meaning that we carried out some non-emergency repairs after the resident had moved in. The repairs for some properties that were occupied towards the end of 2018-19 were funded from the 2019-20 budget, leading to the increased average figure for the year.

Number of homes re-let

2019-20: 1,128 ↓

2018-19: 1,339



Average re-let time for general needs properties

2019-20: 24 days ↓

2018-19: 27 days



Average cost of relets

2019-20: £3,419 ↑

2018-19: £2,242



MONEY MATTERS

Last year was the final year of the government 2016 rent-setting policy of reducing rents by 1% a year for four years. Although we were collecting less income, our collection rate improved and we were able to reduce arrears.

Households evicted for rent arrears

2019-20: 39 ↓
2018-19: 50



Residents offered support by Financial Inclusion Officers

2019-20: 1,523 ↑
2018-19: 1,332



Helped to claim in grants and additional benefits

2019-20: £2.0m ↑
2018-19: £1.7m



Weekly arrears

2019-20: 3.02% ↓
(Target 3.50%)
2018-19: 3.22%



Monthly arrears

2019-20: 2.91% ↓
(Target 3.50%)
2018-19: 3.33%



HELPING PEOPLE INTO WORK

As part of our commitment to the local community, over the past year our Income team worked in partnership with Coalville Job Centre on a couple of projects to help get people back into work.

The first involved offering five people the chance of a work placement to enable them to learn what it is like working for a housing provider and the type of duties involved. As a direct result of the placements - which saw the jobseekers spend a week with us - three were employed by us as Income Assistants.

For the second project, a group of volunteers from across emh group came together to support local jobseekers with CV writing, job applications, preparing for interviews and mock interviews. Our team used their charity

days to help people fulfil their potential, demonstrating that we are far more than just a landlord. The mentoring was completed over a three-week period, with two volunteers working together in each of the two-hour sessions.

The jobseekers took full advantage of the opportunity, and as well as gaining confidence as the sessions progressed

were able to offer constructive feedback about what we could do better to promote housing as a career of choice.

To support our ambition to improve opportunities for people, last year we recruited 14 new members to the award-winning emh group apprenticeship academy. This means we are well on our way to delivering 250 apprenticeships and traineeships by 2023.



RECOGNISING SUCCESS

Five of our housing schemes for older people won medals at the **2019 East Midlands Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) Awards**, which celebrate the best specialist housing and aim to help shape the future of homes for later life.



In their respective categories, Prior Park in Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Oak Court in Blaby won Gold, Vrudha Nivas in Loughborough took Silver, and Abington Lodge in Northampton and St Michael's Court in Sutton-in-Ashfield took Bronze.

Residents, visitors, volunteers and staff all voted for their favourite, which makes the recognition all the more satisfying.

Vrudha Nivas, a housing scheme for older Asian people, was also shortlisted for its multicultural approach in the *24housing Diversity Awards*, which recognise and celebrate the best work taking place in the housing sector to address inequality and celebrate diversity.

Overall satisfaction level with Housing & Neighbourhood services: 86%.



TENANT INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

This standard covers how we provide opportunities for residents to scrutinise our services and make recommendations for improvement. It also includes letting you know how we use complaints to improve services and reporting to you through this annual report on our performance.



TOGETHER WITH TENANTS

We are one of the first housing associations to sign up to the Together with Tenants charter, designed by the National Housing Federation to create a stronger and more balanced relationship between tenants and their landlord.

The charter was published in July 2019 and includes the following commitments:



1. Relationships:

Housing associations will treat all residents with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between residents and housing associations will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.

2. Communication:

Residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from their housing association on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues.

3. Voice and influence:

Views from residents will be sought and valued and this information will be used to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

4. Accountability:

Collectively, residents will work in partnership with their housing association to independently scrutinise and hold their housing association to account for the decisions that affect their homes and services and the quality of the homes and services they provide.

5. Quality:

Residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

6. When things go wrong:

Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints, and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

Led by the Residents' Scrutiny Panel, a group of dedicated and committed involved residents worked hard over several months looking at dozens of publications and documents, producing an evidence review of how we are currently performing against the charter commitments.



Here are the summaries of their findings:

1. Relationships

On the whole, the panel felt that relationships with emh homes staff at all levels worked well. The panel felt that a widening of resident engagement opportunities could improve relationships. In addition, residents generally have a low perception that they feel listened to. There is also some work to be done in improving the relationship with the Board and creating greater opportunities for residents to interact with the Board and for the Board to hear first-hand the experiences of residents.

2. Communication

Whilst many of the documents and intentions of emh homes to communicate with residents are good, the need to ensure that communication closes the loop back to residents is critical to success. emh homes is on a transformation journey, for which a strong website is essential.

REQUIRES
IMPROVEMENT/
GOOD



REQUIRES
IMPROVEMENT



3. Voice and Influence

The wide range of opportunities for residents to become involved has increased over the last 12-18 months at emh homes and consequently more residents are finding their voice, particularly through digital communications such as surveys. The investigations of the Scrutiny Panel and the work of the Service Improvement Groups (SIGs) and Coordinating Committee and RACS (Residents Action Committee South) are actively requested and supported by emh homes and on the whole it is a successful influencing pathway. Improvement again relates to communication and in particular to closing the loop and feeding back to residents how their voices really did influence the outcomes and any changes made by emh homes. Greater use of the online panels needs to be encouraged for both emh homes teams and residents' groups and in the case of the latter this will demonstrate that the groups are representative of wider residents' views.

GOOD



4. Accountability

GOOD



We have been able to easily evidence our ability to hold emh homes to account. They readily provide us with information in the majority of cases when asked and often this is provided before we ask i.e. through SIGs. Engaged residents have also been able to shadow teams which further allows us to understand where accountability for activities affecting tenants lives. Some of the documents, however, do not demonstrate the outcomes of residents' challenges and there needs to be a better way of feeding the impact of the challenges made back to the wider resident base.

5. Quality

GOOD



The panel found that overall the quality of the home, service and interactions with emh homes was good. There is a substantial amount of tenant consultation around quality of interactions, repairs, services etc. Transactional surveys show a high satisfaction level amongst residents. There are some areas where improvements can be made and these include voids standards and the voids inspections process, complaints handling and meeting timescales, and linked to the *Communication Commitment*, clearer information and more information about residents' responsibilities and emh homes' responsibilities.

6. When things go wrong

GOOD



Whilst some methods of information and communication to support when things go wrong require improvement, overall emh homes' approach and processes to help are **Good**.



Overall the management teams were welcoming of the findings of the report and congratulate the Together with Tenants panel on a thorough review of the way emh homes works with its residents.

The panel has reviewed a substantial amount of evidence, questioned this and asked for additional information to cement understanding. Not only does this therefore demonstrate a robust process, it also shows that our residents are fully committed in working with us to improve services, relationships, and as the report recognises, communication.



KATHRYN EYRE,
HEAD OF QUALITY & STANDARDS

The emh homes Board has welcomed the charter and has adopted a number of interim measures while an action plan based on the findings is reviewed by the involved residents who took part in the evidence review.

All papers submitted for Board meetings will include a new section relating to tenants' views and the evidence on which those views are based.

Summary reports of Board meetings will be prepared by the Governance team for the Coordinating Committee where their meetings follow Board meetings, and that Board members who attend the Coordinating Committee meetings will answer any questions about contents of the reports. To complete the cycle, the Governance team will report back to Board a summary of the discussions.



The Board will feed back to the Scrutiny Panel how they monitor and ensure the delivery of their recommendations.



COMPLAINTS

We are always looking to improve our services, so we welcome any feedback. For most complaints, where necessary we can make small adjustments to our procedures, but where we start to see a pattern emerging, we will undertake a more in-depth review. We may also refer some policies and procedures to the Scrutiny Panel or the relevant SIG for review.



The majority of complaints over the year were about repairs and the speed of communication via Customer Services. During the winter months there was an unexpectedly high number of calls relating to heating and weather damage, leading to an increase in the number of complaints. To address these issues, during the year we made the following changes:

Changing the way our Customer Service Centre operates during busier periods (e.g. roofing repairs during storms and boiler repairs in winter) to reduce waiting times. A designated Customer Service Advisor will oversee every request relating to specific issues, ensure delivery through liaising with Property Services and contractors, and keep tenants updated.

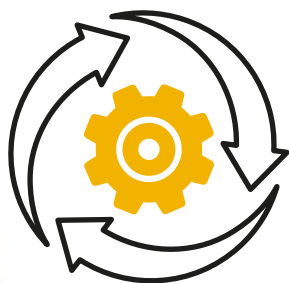
Customer Services transferring calls regarding repairs to the Planning team to resolve and book appointments.

You told us that you wanted faster resolution of queries at the first point of contact rather than wait for call-backs from other teams. We have therefore provided our Customer Service Advisors with training through collaborative working with the other teams and expanded our knowledge database.



Our Gas team has taken over the responsibility for gas engineer appointments (repairs and safety inspections) from the Planning team, freeing up the planners to spend more time on day to day repairs.

To speed up the time taken to complete repairs, we have reviewed with our suppliers and contractors the time it takes to obtain the relevant parts. New processes will ensure our operatives have the parts needed to complete the job on the first visit as much as possible.



We have changed our out-of-hours areas and contractor responsibilities, allowing us to cover a wider area. Our out-of-hours contractor Pinnacle has been also given more authority to be able to better support customers when responding to out of hours calls.

Formal complaints received

2019-20: 545 ↑

2018-19: 484



Concerns

(resolved at first point of contact without having to go through a formal investigation)

2019-20: 5,613 ↑

2018-19: 4,142



Compliments

2019-20: 768 ↑

2018-19: 362



Key: 2019-20 ■ 2018-19 ■



INVOLVED RESIDENTS

Our involved residents spent much of the year reviewing documents preparing for the implementation of the Together with Tenants charter, but still found time to carry out their commitments to the Scrutiny Panel and the SIGs.



The Scrutiny Panel ensures that the services tenants receive are high-quality, relevant and value for money by investigating a range of services using their 12-step plan.

This year the panel looked at our approach to anti-social behaviour, including risk assessments and the letters we send to complainants and perpetrators at every stage of the process. They have now completed their investigation, compiled a report on their findings, and made recommendations for the emh homes Board to consider and approve. The next steps will be to monitor progress of the recommendations and ensure that they have been completed.

This was an outstanding piece of work from the Scrutiny Panel, and at times it was challenging and difficult for us, but it has transformed the way we work. This demonstrates that residents are truly at the heart of shaping our services, and this approach will serve as a template for Together with Tenants.

The Scrutiny Panel has played a key role in influencing our approach to tenant engagement, we now have an on-line panel of around 3,000 tenants.



Other key Board decisions around involvement include:

- ▶ Approval of our Older Persons' Strategy, after taking into account resident and staff consultation feedback.
- ▶ Consideration of intergenerational housing. As part of the development of the Older Persons' Strategy, a workshop was held to explore the possibility of developing an intergenerational approach within some of our sheltered housing schemes.
- ▶ Approval of the Development Strategy 2019-2023, which sets out to our customers, stakeholders and partners our approach and priorities in delivering 2,750 new homes.
- ▶ Approval of a five-year 'Let's Engage' Strategy to continue to further build on our success in resident involvement.

- ▶ Involvement in the Homes for Cathy group which was formed by a number of housing associations that came together to mark the 50th anniversary of Cathy Come Home and to highlight the continuing needs of homeless people.
- ▶ Approval of a 4-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- ▶ Approval of the Homelessness Strategy following consultation with local authorities, Neighbourhoods SIG, Co-ordinating Committee, and the Residents Action Committee South (RACS).
- ▶ The Chairs of our Consumer Regulation Co-ordinating Committee and Scrutiny Panel were advised of our engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) in relation to the Rent Standard.
- ▶ Working with the Scrutiny Panel to deliver the action plan in relation to the Anti-Social Behaviour service in relation to risk assessments and communication.

The Neighbourhoods SIG carried out a review of the tenant handbook, covering what it should include and how it should be presented. Their recommendations will be taken on board when the handbook is updated. They also reviewed and approved a revised Domestic Violence and Hate Crime policy, and our Homelessness strategy and how it should be presented on our website. Towards the end of the year the group established a timetable for a Task & Finish review of parking and estate inspections.

The Property Services SIG helped choose a single type of boiler, reducing the types of spare parts that our operatives need to carry in their vans. They also started a review of void (empty properties) inspections, ironing out possible problems before starting a pilot scheme in Blaby. Unfortunately, this had to be put on hold following lockdown.

The Customer Experience SIG reviewed the complaints process, with a particular focus on seeing if a resolution could be reached quicker. Once again, this had to be put on hold due to lockdown, but we have since introduced virtual Stage 2 panels, which has speeded up the process as identified by the SIG.

All the SIGs reviewed, or are in the process of reviewing, their Terms of Reference to align themselves with the Together with Tenants charter.



NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR INVOLVING RESIDENTS

We were delighted to be finalists at the Tpas Awards 2019 in the *Outstanding Tenant Engagement – Large Landlord* category. (Tpas is the national organisation supporting tenant participation/ involvement.)

The shortlisting was in recognition of our efforts to launch fully-flexible online resident involvement opportunities, doubling the number of actively involved residents and allowing us to engage with a wider demographic of residents and provide the opportunity for more voices to be heard.

Congratulations also to Roy Swann, Chair of the Residents Action Committee South (RACS), who was shortlisted in the *Tenant of the Year* category.

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

Amount spent on resident involvement

(not including staff time)

2019-20: £33,277 ↓

2018-19: £54,483



This sum is lower than last year for three reasons: there was a change in the Scrutiny Panel membership which meant we paid out less on mileage, we were able to source cheaper lunches, and we were able to sell places on our training courses to other housing organisations and local authorities to help keep costs down. The reduced spending does not represent a reduced commitment to involved residents, which remains as high as ever.

NEIGHBOURHOOD & COMMUNITY

This standard includes keeping your neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe, and working in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour. It also includes co-operating with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas.



CLEAN & CLEAR COMMUNITIES

Last year we created a small team to oversee fly-tipping removal, waste collection, and cleaning. Part of emh Sharpes, the Clean & Clear team is helping us deliver a standardised service across all our communities.

Reports of fly-tipping used to be dealt with by an external company, but bringing the service in-house gives us greater control over where resources are focused and more influence over recycling. The team works to a five-day turnaround timescale, which is more cost effective and means we can do more with less.

This approach also means that we can better monitor evidence to help identify perpetrators, and work with the Housing & Neighbourhoods team to help reduce the number of incidents.

BEFORE



AFTER



With thanks to residents on the Property Services SIG, we also appointed a new cleaning service which operates across our properties, making it fairer for all. The service covers communal areas and sheltered schemes.

REPAIRS IN COMMUNAL AREAS

During the year, many repairs in communal areas were going unreported and not getting picked up until a member of our team visited, often on an unrelated matter. To ensure that the common areas of our estates remain as safe as possible, we have introduced a new programme of surveys designed to take a more proactive approach towards these types of repairs as well as other scheme-based issues that need addressing.

Estate inspections

2019-20: 65

2018-19: Not reported

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) covers a wide range of behaviours - from persistent noise nuisance and verbal abuse to serious violence and other criminal activities - which can affect your quality of life and interfere with the enjoyment of your home. We want our residents to feel safe and be proud of where they live, and we work with strategic partners such as the police and local authorities to combat any reported concerns regarding ASB. We also encourage complainants to contact relevant agencies themselves to report any issues.

Our ASB procedures include various measures that we can take to help combat reported concerns, including warning letters, acceptable behaviour contracts, and more serious interventions such as possession orders.

The Scrutiny Panel recently reviewed the ASB policy and procedures. [See page 28.](#)

New cases recorded

2019-20: 353 ↑

2018-19: 298



Evictions for ASB

2019-20: 2 ↔

2018-19: 2



Key: 2019-20 ■ 2018-19 ■



1
YOUR HOME

2
YOUR TENANCY

3
TENANT INVOLVEMENT
& EMPOWERMENT

4
NEIGHBOURHOOD
& COMMUNITY

5
WHERE YOUR MONEY
IS SPENT

6
CUSTOMER SERVICES

HOME

WHERE YOUR MONEY IS SPENT

As a profit-for-purpose organisation, any surplus is invested back into our homes and services.



INCOME

Total rent income collected
(including arrears)

2019-20: £74.5m (100.17%) ↑

2018-19: £73.2m (99.79%)

**Arrears collected from
former tenants**
(not included above)

2019-20: £225k (Target £183k) ↑

2018-19: £198k

INCOME SPENT ON HOMES AND SERVICES

The Property Services budgets are set by Finance and the Board, and are increased annually in line with inflation and business requirements.

£m

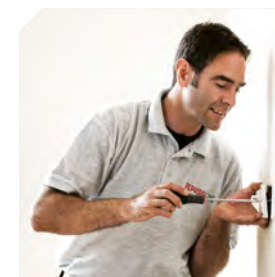
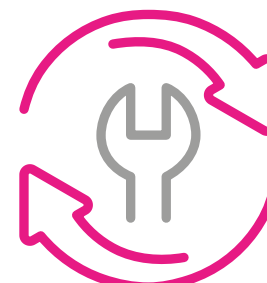
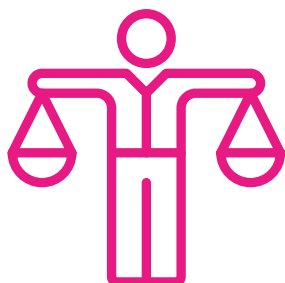
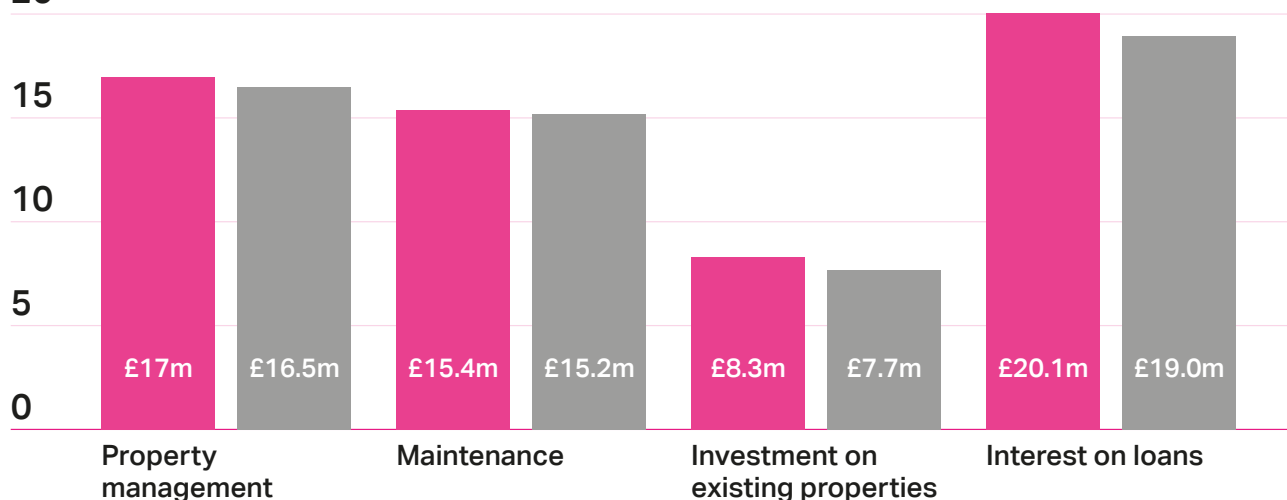
20

15

10

5

0



HOW YOUR SERVICE CHARGE IS SPENT

Total spent

2019-20: £7.2m ↔

2018-19: £7.2m

1. Equipment maintenance

2019-20: £1.1m ↓

2018-19: £1.3m

2. Utilities

2019-20: £0.7m ↔

2018-19: £0.7m

3. Cleaning

2019-20: £0.8m ↑

2018-19: £0.7m

4. Grounds maintenance

2019-20: £1.5m ↔

2018-19: £1.5m

5. Staffing

2019-20: £1.0m ↔

2018-19: £1.0m

6. Other costs

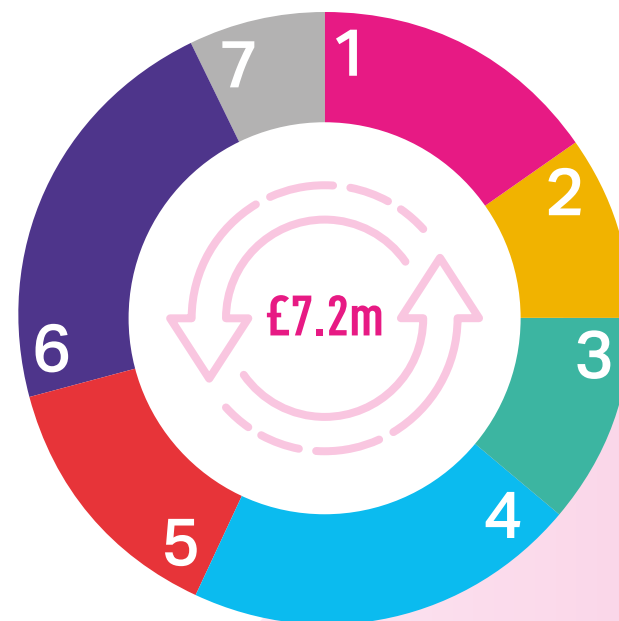
2019-20: £1.6m ↑

2018-19: £1.4m

7. Depreciation

2019-20: £0.5m ↓

2018-19: £0.6m



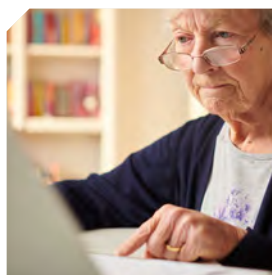
CUSTOMER SERVICES

Our Customer Services team operates across all areas of the business and crosses all the standards.



HOW YOU REACH US

We are pleased to see that digital contact is proving popular with you. Over the year we saw a significant decrease in the number of phone calls we received, and an even more significant increase in the number of contacts through myhomeonline. Over half of our residents (51%) are now registered to use the digital platform compared to just over a quarter (28%) last year.



1. Phone calls

2019-20: 134,713 ↓

2018-19: 154,000

2. Emails

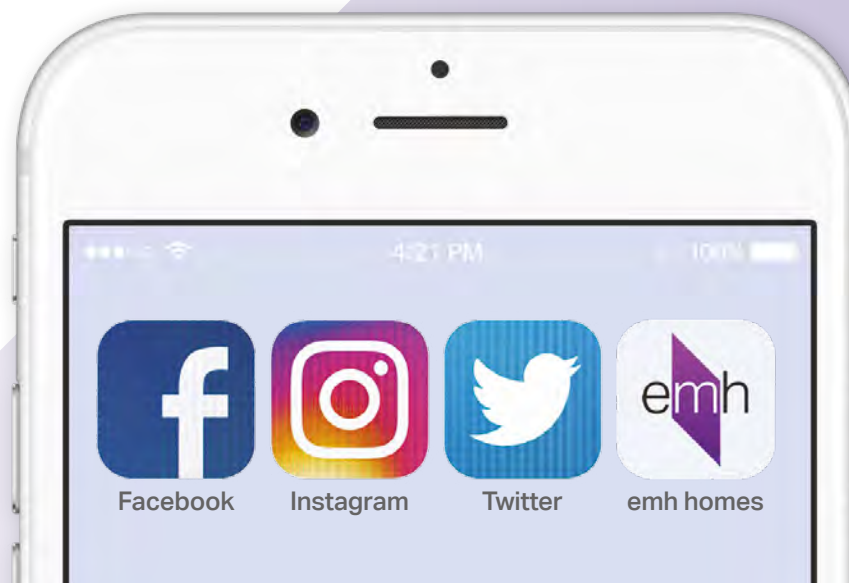
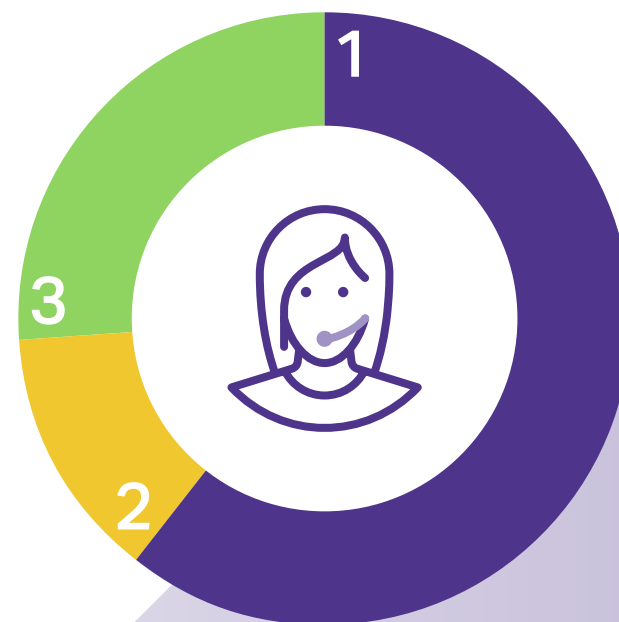
2019-20: 29,631 ↑

2018-19: 25,300




3. Contact through myhomeonline

2019-20: 57,500 ↑

2018-19: 36,063



We hope that you have found this report useful.
If you have any suggestions as to how we could
improve the report next year, please let us know.

- ▶ Text us on: **07860 024 523**
Text the word '**Bal**' or '**Balance**' and your
account balance will be automatically
sent back to you
- ▶ Text the word '**Callback**' and a member
of our Customer Services team
will ring you back
- ▶ You can email us at:
enquiries@emhhomes.org.uk
or visit **www.emhhomes.org.uk**
- ▶ Follow us on social media:
   **@emhhomes**
- ▶ Call us on: **0300 123 6000**

