

Leicester City Council

# Tenants and Leaseholders

Annual Report 2019





## **Opening statement, Councillor Cutkelvin, Assistant Mayor for Housing**

I am delighted to be able to welcome you to our 2018 / 19 annual report. It's been another eventful year as we continue to improve our services to make sure that they meet your needs and the requirements of new government legislation. You can read more about what's been happening here.

This report will provide you with information on some of our many achievements this year and also about our aims for improving and developing your services in the future. It will also allow you to see how effective we have been in working to meet your needs.

I would like to thank all who have helped us improve our services with their feedback. Your views are crucial in helping us make sure we're getting things right and letting us know when we're not. I would like to say a special thank you to the members of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum who give their time, experience and expertise voluntarily to help improve the services for all council tenants and leaseholders.

I hope you enjoy reading the report and that, like me, you are excited about the way our Housing services are going to develop over the coming year.



## **Welcome from Wendy Biddles, Chair of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum**

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As the Chair of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum, I'm delighted to have this opportunity to tell you about the important work that we have carried out on behalf of our communities over the past year. Myself and other members of the Forum are tenants and leaseholders with many years' experience of working to make sure the voices of local people are heard.

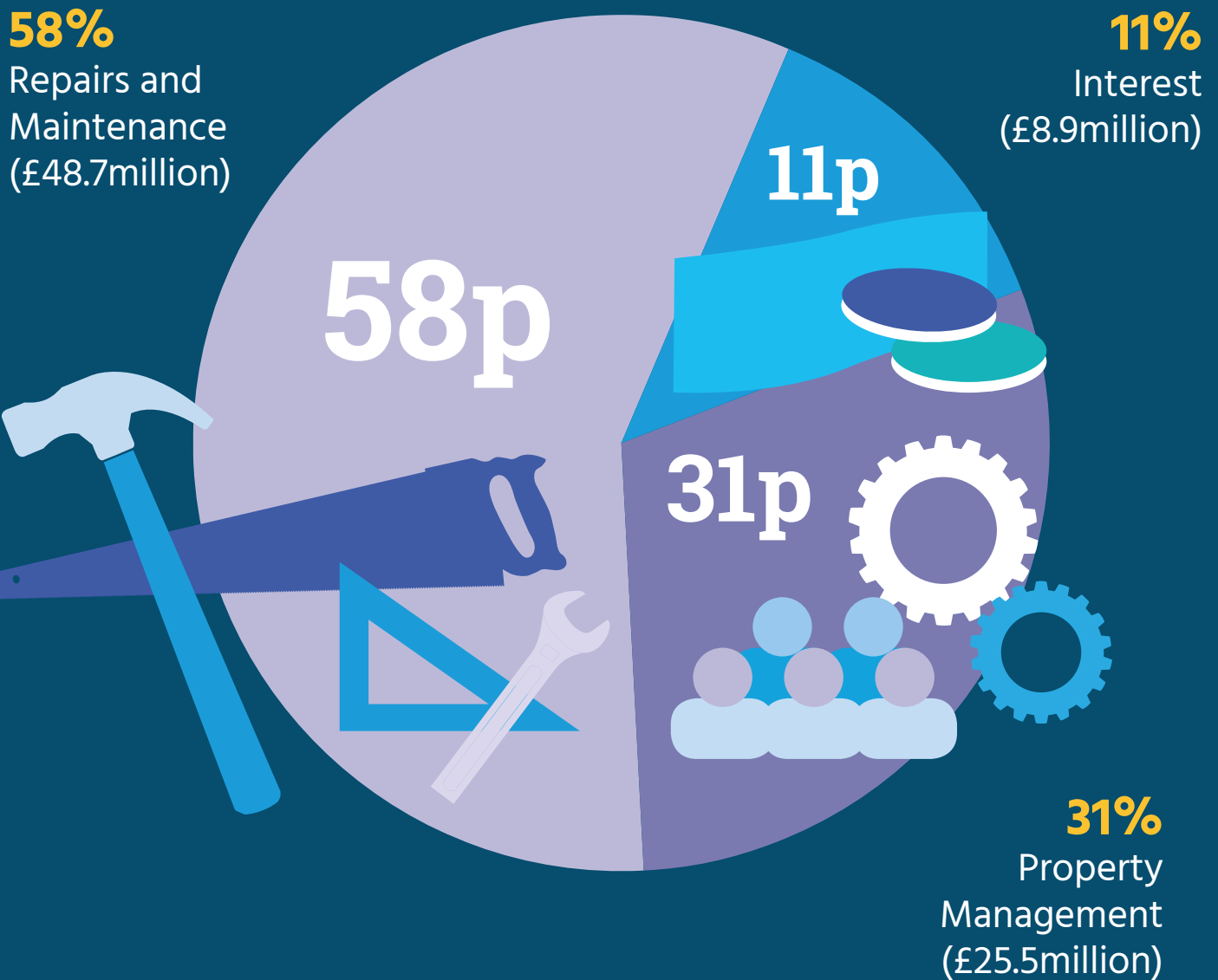
We are volunteers. One of our main aims is to work with the council to help ensure that services are as effective as they can be and that they are delivered to those who need them most in a way that they can access them. This year we've helped to review a number of key Housing services.

I hope you enjoy this annual report and that you find it informative and useful. You can find out more about the work of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum later in the report. There is also information about how you can become a Forum member; we would love to hear from anyone who is interested in joining us.

# How we spend our money

## 2018/19 Expenditure

Each £1 of rent and service charge income pays for:



# Our tenants and leaseholders

We have:

- 20,238 council homes
- 226 HomeCome homes
- 1,319 Leaseholder homes

## Facts and figures for 2018 / 19

- 704 households became new tenants
- We carried out 90,039 repairs
- We completed 99.6% of annual gas safety checks
- We fitted a total of 735 new kitchens and bathrooms (546 new kitchens and 189 new bathrooms)
- 295 complaints were received (down from 365 last year). Of these, 187 were for Housing Repairs, 41 for Housing Options and 67 for other services. The number of complaints that were upheld were 51 (17%)
- 99.46% of rent due, which totalled £73,137,266 was collected
- Took 206,900 phone calls of which 119,556 related to repairs and 13,857 were for out of hours emergencies
- Sold 424 properties through the Right to Buy Scheme

WEST  
Neighbourhood  
Area

EAST  
Neighbourhood  
Area

SOUTH  
Neighbourhood  
Area



West (formerly Beaumont Leys, Mowmacre and New Parks areas)

- 6,634 council homes
- 108 HomeCome homes
- 202 Leaseholder homes



South (formerly Braunstone, Eyres Monsell and Saffron areas)

- 6,234 council homes
- 48 HomeCome homes
- 192 Leaseholder homes



East (formerly, Central, Humberstone and Rowllatts Hill areas)

- 7,370 council homes
- 70 HomeCome homes
- 925 Leaseholder homes

Property size	Average Weekly Leicester City Council	Average Weekly private rental
Bedsit	£53.20	£95.08
One bedroom	£61.56	£115.85
Two bedroom	£72.63	£143.31
Three bedroom	£80.32	£168.00
Four bedroom	£94.28	£249.00

## What we achieved in 2018 / 19

- A new Leaseholder Liaison Team was introduced in October 2018. There is also a new Council Leaseholder web page.
- Our Leicester to Work Neighbourhood Improvement Team employed 10 long term unemployed people on six months contracts to provide them with work experience and to help maintain our estates. A further 10 people started working for the team in April 2019.
- 1,322 anti-social behaviour cases were investigated.
- Working with new LCC tenants (where assistance was needed) from 2017 we have helped ensure that 89.8% of new tenants kept their tenancies for over a year.
- 99.6% of gas safety checks were carried out.
- 88.4 % of repairs were completed within target.
- The percentage of repairs completed at first visit (excluding external works) was 89.4%.
- We introduced electronic monitoring of repairs customer satisfaction to improve the service.
- The Affordable Housing Programme delivered 224 new homes.
- The housing register was reviewed this year to help address the issue of overcrowding in the city.
- The St Peters Tower Block Refurbishment Programme is close to completion. The total investment in this project is £10.3m.
- £750,000 was invested in environmental and communal works. It was shared across the city in all neighbourhood housing areas. Works included parking improvements, resurfacing courtyards, improving the security of estates by the installation of gates and removal of bushes.
- The new Housing Online portal went live in January 2019. This portal allows Housing customers to register for an account, log on and access some services around council housing.
- We are maintaining our ongoing commitment to prioritising fire safety through the continued delivery of our Fire Inspection Strategy.
- Rent arrears at the end of 2018/19 were £1,627,034.46. The proportion of rent collected between 2018/19 was 99.46%.
- Evictions due to rent arrears have been reduced to just 35, despite the introduction of Universal Credit. This is the lowest level for four years.
- We have continued the reduction in CO2 emissions from council homes through the Capital Programme, exceeding our reduction target.

## The Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum

The Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum helps represent your views to us. There are members from across the city with a wealth of experience about the kinds of needs you may have and ways you want your services to be delivered.

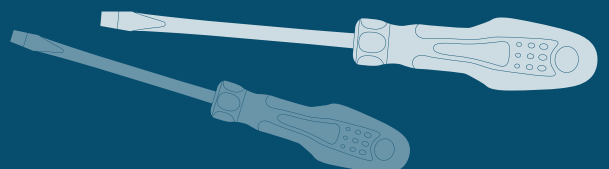
The Forum meets every other month. When all places are taken the Forum has 14 members (12 tenants and 2 leaseholders).

The Forum works with staff to resolve any issues that members of their communities are experiencing with council services. They are consulted on key decisions we take and on the introduction of new policies and services to make sure we get them right.

Joe Carroll is the Vice Chair of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum. He told us:

"The Forum plays an important role in making sure your voice is heard. I joined the Forum to make a positive difference to people's lives in the city. Using my experience and understanding of people's needs in my local area I've been able to raise their concerns and make sure they're addressed. We work together with the council to make sure money is spent wisely and we monitor the council's performance to ensure high standards continue to be met. I'm proud of the work I've been a part of and the way it has improved the day to day lives of the council's tenants and leaseholders."

Some of the work that the Forum has been involved with this year has included helping us meet the needs of people on Universal Credit, developing the communal cleaning service and being consulted on the proposed Housing Revenue Account Budget, in which council tenants' rents are set.



Your LCC Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum members are:

Name	Area
<b>Wendy Biddles</b> (Chair)	Humberstone and Rowlatts Hill
<b>Joe Carroll</b> (Vice chair)	New Parks
<b>Gwen Clifford</b>	Humberstone and Rowlatts Hill
<b>Jamal Abdullah</b>	Humberstone and Rowlatts Hill
<b>Jean Williams</b>	Centre
<b>Peter Hookway</b>	Beaumont Leys and Mowmacre
<b>May Jones</b>	Saffron and Eyres Monsell
<b>Ann Green</b>	New Parks
<b>Phillip Allen</b>	Leaseholder representative

We currently have Forum vacancies in the Centre, Beaumont leys / Mowmacre and Braunstone areas of the city. We also have a leaseholder representative vacancy. If you are interested in becoming a forum member and want to find out more, please email us at [housing-transformation-team@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:housing-transformation-team@leicester.gov.uk)

There are a number of ways that you can become more involved locally, including, becoming a member of a Tenants and Residents Association, responding to surveys when we ask your views, or taking part in estate inspections. To find out more about local involvement activities, call 0116 454 1007 or email: [tenantsadvicecentre@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:tenantsadvicecentre@leicester.gov.uk)



## The Leaseholders' Forum

We now have a Leaseholders' Forum which meets every three months to look at the needs of council leaseholders and to get their input to make sure services are delivered effectively. These meetings will have topics determined by the leaseholders. Input from leaseholders is really important to us, to ensure we are continuing to improve services. All leaseholders are invited to attend the forums. If you would like to find out more, please email: [lcc-leaseholder@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:lcc-leaseholder@leicester.gov.uk)

## What we are planning to do

- Install heat meters in properties with district heating so that tenants can be charged exactly for the heating and hot water that they use.
- Demolish Goscote House due to high maintenance costs and the estimated short life span of the building. On-site works are scheduled to commence in April 2020 and the building will be replaced with new affordable housing. Tenants will be found alternative accommodation.
- The affordable housing target for 2019/20 is 335 new properties (all affordable housing types).
- The Gas Servicing Team will be undertaking the installation of boiler swaps (along with a contractor) when a boiler reaches the end of its natural life or reaches a level of unacceptable efficiency.
- The Housing Online Portal will expand the range of Housing Division services which can be accessed through it, including the Choice Based Lettings and Housing Application services. As part of the planned expansion, there will be the facility to view repairs appointments on-line.



- £750,000 will be invested in environmental and communal works. This could include a range of schemes such as improving car parking, resurfacing courtyards and landscaping areas.
- Work will be undertaken to improve the service to residents of sheltered accommodation.
- Additional car parking will be developed on Dysart Way for St Matthews residents.
- The building of new council homes on council-owned sites is projected to start by late summer/autumn 2019. In the first phase, 29 new homes will be built.
- Installing sprinkler systems - following the installation of a sprinkler system in Maxfield House in 2018/19, a further 4 tower blocks will have systems retro-fitted at a cost of £1.35m.
- Fire door replacements will take place in communal areas where fire risk assessments and audits have shown the need for replacement.
- Van Racking will be introduced - the use of appropriate racking (storage) within vans to hold materials, to improve the effectiveness of the Repairs and Maintenance service.



## Closing comments from Chris Burgin – the Director of Housing

This has been another challenging year as we have looked to maintain and improve our services in the light of continuing financial restrictions.

However, as with all challenges, there are also opportunities and we have continued to embrace new technology and new ways of working to deliver your services as effectively as possible. We have also taken advantage of changes in government policy to develop our affordable house building programme, providing new homes for those in need.

This year marks 100 years since the first council homes were built. Council housing continues to play a crucial role in providing quality homes for those who need them. I'm excited and optimistic about the possibilities for the future and look forward to working with you to keep council housing at the heart of our communities, where it belongs.

Finally, I'd like to say a special thanks for the hard work of our Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum who have played an important role in making sure our services meet our customers' needs and expectations.

## Contact us

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Telephone: 0116 454 1007

Out of hours emergencies: 0116 254 9439

Email: [tenantsadvicecentre@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:tenantsadvicecentre@leicester.gov.uk)

Website: [www.leicester.gov.uk](http://www.leicester.gov.uk)

