



TENANT ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

SERVING PEOPLE, IMPROVING LIVES



**NEWARK &
SHERWOOD**
DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW OF THE HOUSING SERVICE DURING 2023/24

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 became law in July 2023 and brings in a new era of regulation aimed at making sure:

- you are safe in your home
- you have your voice heard
- you know how we (as your landlord) are performing
- you know your rights
- you know how to hold us (as your landlord) to account if things go wrong

So, it's no surprise that much of our focus in 2023/24 has been on preparing for the changes introduced by the Government.

While great progress has been made, we know there's a lot more to do and we need your continued influence and scrutiny to make sure the services we provide are the services you want and need.



WELCOME TO THE TENANT ANNUAL REPORT FROM YOUR LOCAL INFLUENCE NETWORK (LIN) CHAIRS

In the last 12 months we have had the Social Housing Act gain Royal Assent which should improve things for all social housing residents across the UK.

A key requirement of this new law is that landlords must evidence how they engage and listen to all their tenants and use this feedback to improve services.

Locally, the District Council has been working hard to get ahead of the changes needed.

Hopefully you will have had the opportunity to hear what has been happening in your area at both the Local Influence Network and Community Link Group meetings that have been held in lots of different locations across the district over the last year. You can find the next meeting at: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/localinfluencenetwork/community-link-groups

Tenants have had opportunities to get involved in improving their housing service and to have their say through activities like attending working groups, sitting on housing staff interview panels, procurement panels and consultations as well as undertaking scrutiny by sitting on committees looking at issues like gas servicing and repairs that can affect our experience of living in our homes.

This report is an added part of that scrutiny. In it you will be able to see how our landlord services have performed during 2023/24 and learn more about what is being done well and what housing services provided by Newark and Sherwood District Council need improvement.

Thank you for taking the time to read the report. If you have any comments on what's in here or want to get involved with other tenants to help improve the housing service across the Newark and Sherwood district, please get in touch via email at getinvolved@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk or by calling **01636 650 000**.

Kind Regards,

Dale, Helen, Richard and Mick- Chairs of the Newark, Sherwood, Rural and Building Safety Local Influence Networks.

LOCAL INFLUENCE NETWORK REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023/24

Through our Local Influence Network (LIN) we've made some great progress in making sure your views are shaping and improving the services we deliver.

Some highlights of the work done this year include:

Hosted a Scrutiny Panel

We created our first scrutiny panel to review the gas servicing process, making sure the tenant experience was considered. This resulted in several recommendations to improve the process which are being implemented.

A scrutiny panel is something we are going to continue; if you're interested in getting involved, please get in touch!

Set up Community Link Groups

We set up a series of Community Link Groups based at local community centres to make it easier for you to get involved in your housing service. You can come and speak to us in person about things that are important to you and to raise any local issues that we can help with.

We are increasing the number of Community Link Groups so there should be one near you!

Trained tenants to become Empty Home Inspectors

To help improve the quality of homes when being let, we trained tenants to become empty home inspectors. These tenants volunteer to visit our empty homes to check they meet our 'Fit to Let' standard before the Council let them to new tenants.

This work is helping improve our empty homes process and drive-up standards which don't always hit the mark.

Launched the Tenant Times digital newsletter

Involved tenants worked alongside our housing and communications team colleagues to launch the Tenant Times e-newsletter.

This has helpful information for tenants covering a variety of topics, but also includes useful information such as 'who is my tenancy officer?'

The Tenant Times has been a huge success and received some great feedback. To sign up to the newsletter please go to: public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKNSDC/subscriber/new

Community Chest funding

We have had two successful rounds of Community Chest funding, which helps local community led groups apply for funding of up to £1,000 per application.

There were 18 successful applications helping groups such as the Social Action Hub in Rainworth.

The fund will continue this year, so if you know of a group who may benefit, please see the guidelines to apply: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/community-chest

Established a Building Safety Local Influence Network

In line with the Building Safety Act 2022, we appointed a tenant as the Chair of the new Building Safety Local Influence Network.

Meetings are hosted in or around our high-rise blocks of flats to ensure tenants know what measures we have and are putting in place to ensure their safety.

If you live in a flat and want to know when the next meeting is, please email: getinvolved@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Providing views on key consultations

Throughout the year you have provided feedback on 13 consultations.

These included the Housing Ombudsman call for evidence, parking/driveway consultations, Social Housing Rent Cap, Tenancy Agreement Review, the proposed Consumer Standards and Awaab's Law.

This year, **416** new tenants got in touch leading to **68** becoming involved tenants.

That's **416** more tenant voices giving us views, feedback and support - we now have a total of **236** involved tenants which is fantastic!

45 events have been held across the district from our Local Influence Networks to events such as the Hawtonville Halloween Hullabaloo.

We have a range of ways you can be involved, and this be as much or as little time as you want to give. For further information, please head over to the involved tenants section on our website at www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/tenantengagement, email the Tenant Engagement Team at getinvolved@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk or call us on **01636 655 549** or **01636 655 239**.

PERFORMANCE

2023-24 in numbers

Area of performance being measured	Performance	Target
Annual Gas Safety inspections	99.7%	100%
Properties with an Electrical Inspection less than five years old	99.3%	100%
Percentage of Repairs completed at first visit	91.1%	93%
Average Time to re-let Council properties	30.9 days	28 days
Rents Arrears as % of rent charged	1.47%	2.20%

Number of new homes built: 38

Homes sold through the Right to Buy: 13

Number of ASB cases managed: 258

Number of Repairs Appointment made: 16,453

Money invested in New Homes: £4.2 million

Money invested in improving homes: £9.8 million

TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES (TSM'S)

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) came into force from 1 April 2023, and due to be reported to the Regulator of Social Housing from 1 April 2024.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard set by the Regulator of Social Housing requires all registered providers of social housing to collect and report annually on their performance using a core set of defined measures. These measures are called the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM). The TSMs provide tenants with greater transparency about their landlord's performance.

Our survey took place between September and October 2023 across a sample of our tenants with **545** tenants surveyed, approximately 10% of our total tenants, either by telephone (380 surveys) or online (165 surveys).

Survey question	Percentage of satisfied tenants
Satisfaction with overall service	77.9%
Satisfaction with overall repairs service	75.3%
Satisfaction with repairs time taken	69.8%
Satisfaction that home is well maintained	76.9%
Satisfaction that home is safe	84.7%
Satisfaction that council listens to views and acts upon them	68.0%
Satisfaction with being kept informed	69.8%
Satisfaction that treated fairly and with respect	80.8%
Satisfaction with approach to complaints	27.6%
Satisfaction with communal areas	65.5%
Satisfaction with council contribution to neighbourhood	65.1%
Satisfaction with approach to anti-social behaviour	61.7%

We must also send landlord management data along with the tenant satisfaction data – the information we provided is given below:

Landlord measure	Result
Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	99.7%
Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	100%
Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened per 1000 homes	46.3
Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1000 homes	1.1
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	5.8%
Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	91.6%
Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	97.0%
Number of stage one complaints received per 1000 homes	37.3
Number of stage two complaints received per 1000 homes	3.2
Proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	94.7%
Proportion of stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	100%

We have action plans in place to improve the service areas where satisfaction is lower than expected, such as complaint handling and our approach to anti-social behaviour.

You can find the full results of our Tenant Satisfaction Measure Report on our website at: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/housingperformance

We have some local data that compares our results to our neighbouring stock holding Local Authorities:

Satisfaction with...	Newark and Sherwood District Council (70% telephone, 30% online)	Ashfield District Council (97% telephone, 3% face to face)	Mansfield District Council	Broxtowe Borough Council
Satisfaction with overall service	77.9%	88.3%	60.7%	66%
Satisfaction with overall repairs service	75.3%	76.9%	64.2%	71%
Satisfaction with repairs time taken	69.8%	72.8%	56.3%	63%
Satisfaction that home is well maintained	76.9%	80.9%	60.7%	71%
Satisfaction that home is safe	84.7%	88.9%	69.9%	69%
Satisfaction that council listens to views and acts upon them	68.0%	74.1%	49.6%	48%
Satisfaction with being kept informed	69.8%	82.7%	54.1%	57%
Satisfaction that treated fairly and with respect	80.8%	91.7%	72.3%	65%
Satisfaction with approach to complaints	27.6%	48.1%	24.6%	25%
Satisfaction with communal areas	65.5%	70.3%	59.0%	62%
Satisfaction with council contribution to neighbourhood	65.1%	78.3%	50.9%	56%
Satisfaction with approach to anti-social behaviour	61.7%	69.7%	42.9%	49%

FOCUS ON COMPLAINTS

Over the last year we have spent a lot of time understanding complaints in order to improve our services, the quality of our responses to complainants and learn from the issues raised.

Full training has been given to all staff dealing with complaints to ensure you receive the service you should expect.

We have also updated our Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy to ensure we meet the Housing Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code which came into force from April 2024.

COMPLAINTS 2023-24

In 2023-24 we saw a significant increase in the number of complaints made about housing services, with a total of **226** received which is an increase of **61** from 2022/23.

Of the **226** complaints received, **208** were investigated at Stage 1 complaints and **18** were escalated to Stage 2 of our process.

This is an increase of **37%** on the complaints received in 2022/23.

Stage 1 Complaints by service area

Team	Stage 1 number	Stage 1 %	Change from 2022/23
Health and Community Engagement	5	2%	+1%
Housing Services - Tenancy and Estate Management	37	18%	-9%
Housing Services – Housing Options / Allocations	18	9%	-2%
Housing Income and Leasehold Management	4	2%	-3%
Housing Maintenance and Asset Management*	144	69%	+13%
Total Year	208	100%	

Stage 1 Complaints by theme

Complaint themes with highest values	Stage 1 number	Stage 1 %
Time taken to complete repairs	53	25%
Staff conduct	31	15%
Communication	26	13%
Contractors	20	10%

Complaints outcomes

Complaints	Number upheld	Number not upheld	Number partially upheld
Stage 1	104	41	63
Stage 2	8	7	3

HOW ARE WE RESPONDING AND IMPROVING FOLLOWING THESE COMPLAINTS?

We are using the feedback from complaints to find service areas that need improvement and we will make any changes that will make a positive difference.

For example, the Council are investing in a new housing management system, which is due to go live in May 2025, to improve the delivery of core housing services such as responsive repairs and customer contact and help us shape services based on your needs. Housing staff have also undertaken 'We Care' customer care training.

ARE YOU UNHAPPY WITH OUR SERVICES?

We are keen to hear from you when our services exceed or fall below the standards you expect from us. You can give us feedback or make a complaint in a number of ways:

On our website: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/customerfeedback

By email: customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Over the phone: 01636 650 000

Through social media: @NSDCouncil

By letter or in person:

Newark and Sherwood District Council
Castle House
Great North Road
Newark
NG24 1BY

Ollerton Advice Office
Sycamore Road
New Ollerton
Newark
NG22 9PS

If you make a complaint, we will talk to you to understand where our services fell below standard, and what will resolve the complaint for you. We will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days
- Respond to a Stage 1 complaint within 10 working days
- Respond to a Stage 2 complaint within 20 working days

If we need more time to investigate your complaint, we will let you know, and this will be no more than 10 working days at Stage 1 and 20 working days at Stage 2. Any extension will only be for good reason, and this will be clearly explained.

If you require any added support to make your complaint, such as dealing with a someone else who is acting on your behalf, this will be agreed with the investigating officer.

Full details of our Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy is available on our website at: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/customerfeedback

WHAT IS THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN?

The Housing Ombudsman is an independent and impartial service set up to resolve disputes between tenants and leaseholders of social landlords.

The Ombudsman will provide help and advice to tenants and leaseholders and can conduct formal investigations in cases where disputes between tenants or leaseholder and landlord remain unresolved following the completion of the landlord's complaints procedure.

The Housing Ombudsman holds the District Council to account and will intervene if we are not following our own procedures or not dealing with complaints in a prompt and proper manner.

The Housing Ombudsman service is free and can be contacted at any time by:

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Post: Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 1484

Unit D

Preston

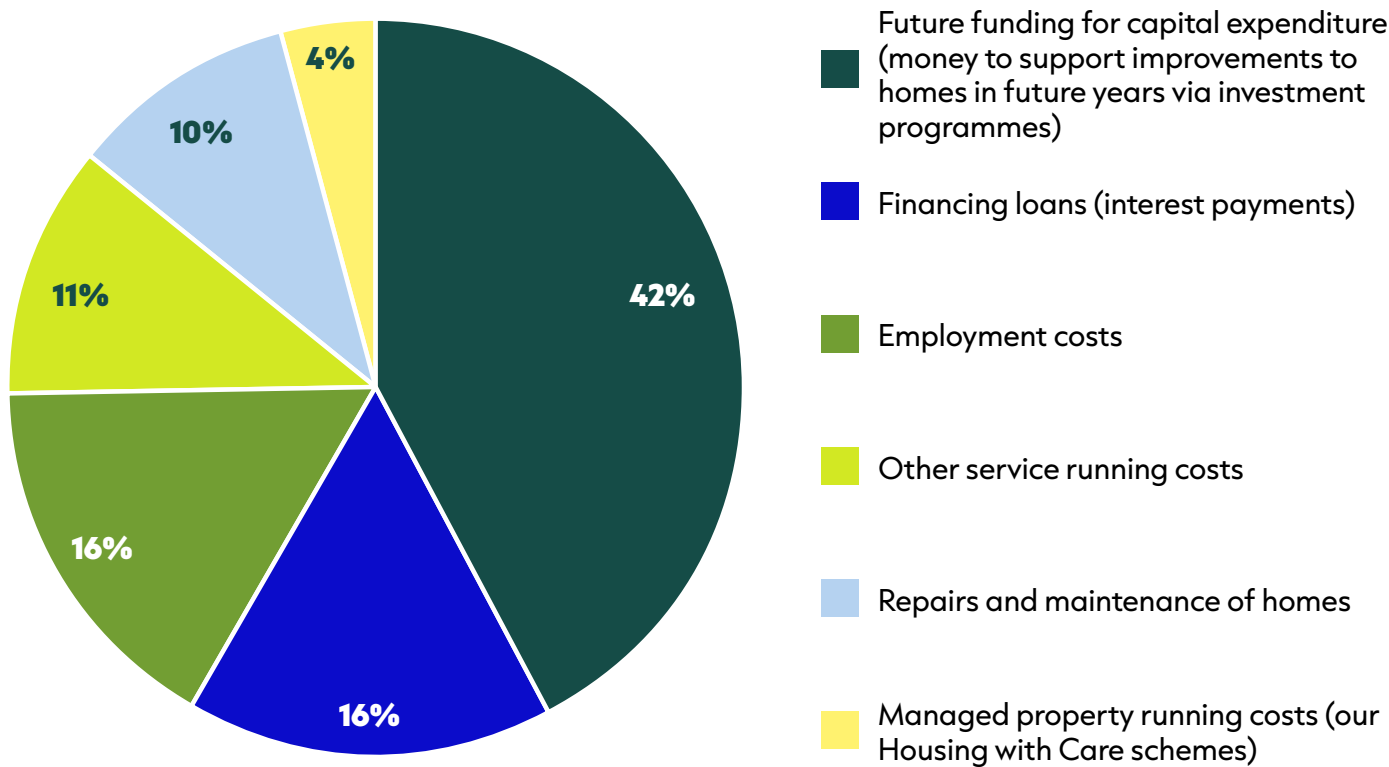
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Further information is available at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

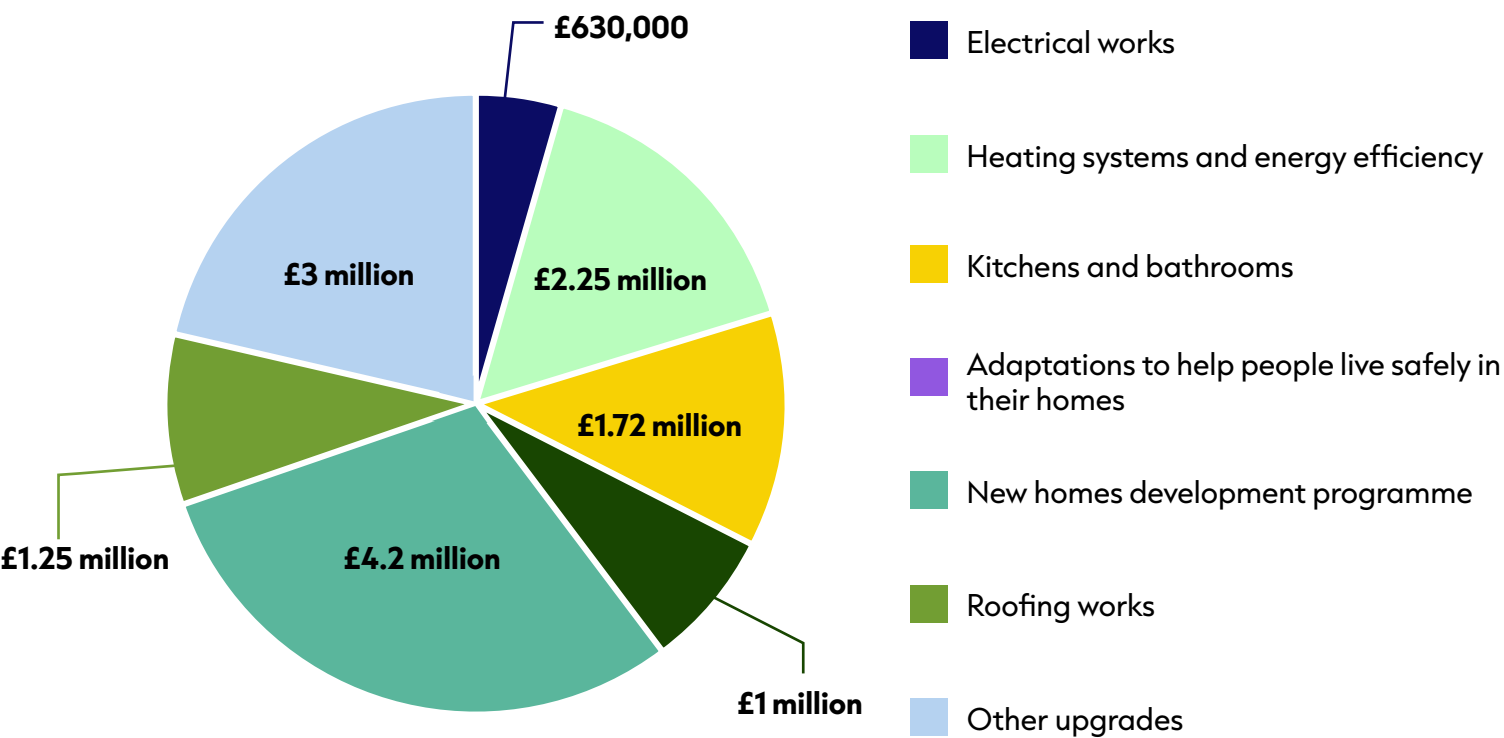


HOW YOUR RENT IS SPENT

The chart below provides a breakdown of how the £24.4 million of income we received in rent payments during 2023/24 was spent:



The chart below shows how your rent has been re-invested into existing homes during 2023/24, including £4.2million invested in new homes.



YOU SAID, WE LISTENED!

In response to feedback, we have made the following changes, with more to come!

You said:

"Cleveland Square Community Link Group asked for new CCTV to help tackle ASB."

We listened – New infrared motion sensor CCTV has been installed .

You said:

"You weren't happy with the standard of empty properties."

We listened – Involved Tenants have been trained to spot check properties before we let them and there is ongoing work happening in this area.

You said:

"Too many of us don't know who our Tenancy Officer is."

We listened – Details are now available on our website and signposted in our newsletters.

You said:

"We want more information on what's going on and how to get involved."

We listened – Alongside the rent statement newsletter, we have launched the Tenant Times to provide more information about what's going on and how to get involved.

SAFE HOMES

Many of the changes to the way social housing is regulated is focused on ensuring homes are safe, warm and of good quality.

We absolutely agree with this and are working hard to improve the standard of your home with £9.8 million invested in improving homes last year.

GAS AND ELECTRIC SAFETY CHECKS

These checks are at the heart of keeping you safe in your home and are legal and regulatory requirements.

Ensuring you provide access to your home for our staff or contractors to complete these checks is essential – the sooner we can complete these checks the better and it makes this service more value for money if we don't have to make multiple visits.

Gas servicing is one of the largest programmes of work we undertake and involves most of our tenants. If you have any feedback on how this is organised or have any feedback on our gas contractor 'Phoenix', who are completing this work on our behalf, please contact us:

By email: customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01636 650 000

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

We have an ongoing programme of completing Fire Risk Assessments for all our blocks of flats, housing with care and high-rise properties.

Annually, if you live in a block of flats, we will write to you and explain how we keep you safe and what safety checks you can expect.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding fire safety, please get in touch on **01636 650 000** or email customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk





DAMP AND MOULD

Any home can suffer from damp and mould, and whilst we aim to maintain our homes to prevent this, sometimes there can be an underlying repair or issue that's causing the problem. If you have an issue with damp or mould in your home, the first thing you should do is contact us, either by calling **01636 650 000** or using the online 'Report a repair' system: <https://myrepair.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk>

We also have some advice on our website on how to reduce the risk of damp and mould in your home: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/damp

MISSED REPAIRS APPOINTMENTS

We are working hard to reduce the number of failed repairs appointments due to tenants not being home when we call.

The current cost of failed appointments is the equivalent cost of employing a member of the repairs team!

Whatever we can do to reduce this will improve the repairs service that our tenants receive. We are working on improving how we manage repairs and the new housing management system will help us to do this, but if you have any suggestions on how we can reduce the number of failed repairs visits, please contact us **01636 650 000** or email customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

CONTACT US...

Our residents, tenants and businesses can contact us in a number of ways.

☎ 01636 650 000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

✉ customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

🌐 www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

In person:

Castle House, Great North Road,
Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 1BY

(9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Ollerton Advice Office, New Ollerton,
Newark, Notts, NG22 9PS

(9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 4:30pm,
Monday to Friday)

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