



Creating opportunities together

Annual Report to Residents 2023



Hello

This report captures our year April 2022 to March 2023. It looks to explain what we've done, our performance, things we've improved on, areas we want to build on further and your satisfaction with our services and homes.

The information we have provided goes beyond the reporting expectations of the current Consumer Standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents who helped shape this report with their feedback, and to those who give their time, skills, and passion to help us deliver better services.

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Welcome



It's vital to us that we're able to hear the voice of all residents and act on people's concerns. The Scrutiny Panel continues to do excellent work, including a recent review of how we handle, communicate, and learn from complaints. The value and importance of residents who shape our services has never been more important to us, and so across the year we re-shaped how we seek your views and allow you to influence our work.

A key focus this year has been driving up your satisfaction. In the past year we've brought all our customer-facing functions together. This helps us focus on doing the basics brilliantly and a collection of key projects: improving repairs, strengthening resident influence, decarbonising homes, offering support during the cost of living crisis, and responding to new consumer regulations.

The speed, quality and reliability of repairs is the top priority for many people and the most important indicator of our performance. So, working closely with residents, we've launched our 'Big Project' to drive up satisfaction and value for money.

We've also focussed heavily on helping you keep homes warm and well. From fire safety projects to damp and mould and a new hardship fund, this report shows some of the ways we've increased our support and strengthened the services that matter most.

Christine Ashton
Executive Director – Housing



How we spend your rent



£91.3m

Total rent income collected (99.53%)

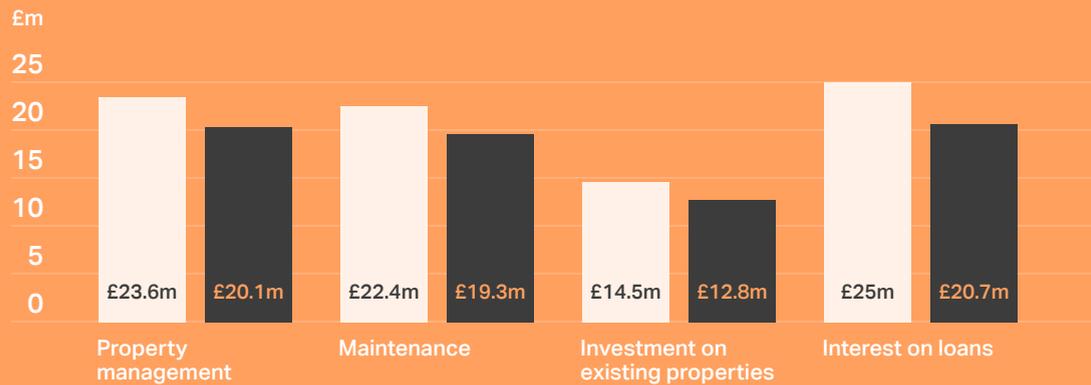
£238.5k

Arrears collected from former tenants

Rental income spent on homes and services

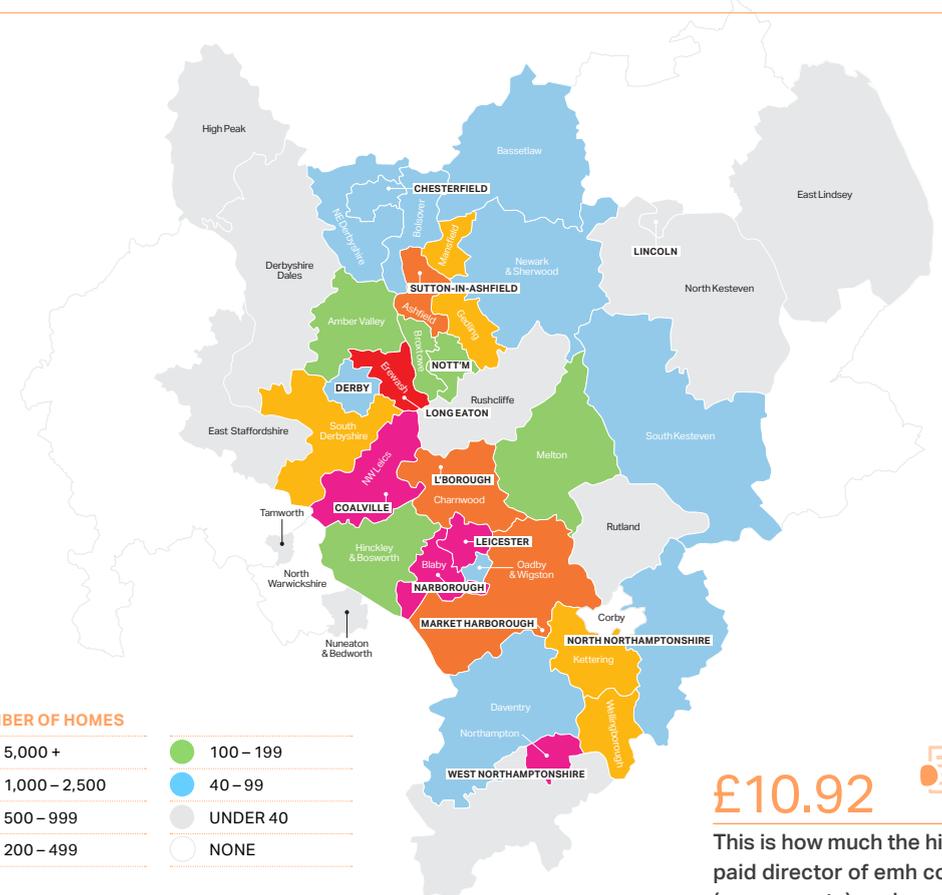
Key: 2022-23 ■ 2021-22 ■

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



In 2022-23, emh arranged new loans and replaced some of its fixed rate debt. This incurred penalties of £3.4m. The outcome is that emh will pay less interest in the future and have more flexibility in spending on its existing homes.

Emh homes owned across the East Midlands



AT A GLANCE

	2022-23	2021-22
Total properties owned and managed	21,795	21,411
Responsive repairs completed within target	94%	85%
Customer satisfaction with repairs	90.8%	89%
Complaints received	981	1,937
Residents helped to claim extra benefits	1,557	1,130
Investment on existing properties	£14.5m	£12.8m
Average time to re-let vacant homes	18.9 days	33 days
Percentage of homes with a gas safety certificate	99.8%	100%

£10.92



This is how much the highest paid director of emh costs (per property) each year.

£53.47

This is how much the group directors of emh cost (per property) each year.

£1,172.94

This is how much emh spend on management costs (per property) each year.

Amplifying your voice



This year we transformed how your voice and influence is heard across our organisation, ensuring our services and decisions are directly-linked to customer input and feedback.



41
Recommendations
by our Scrutiny
Panel



1,607
Involved residents

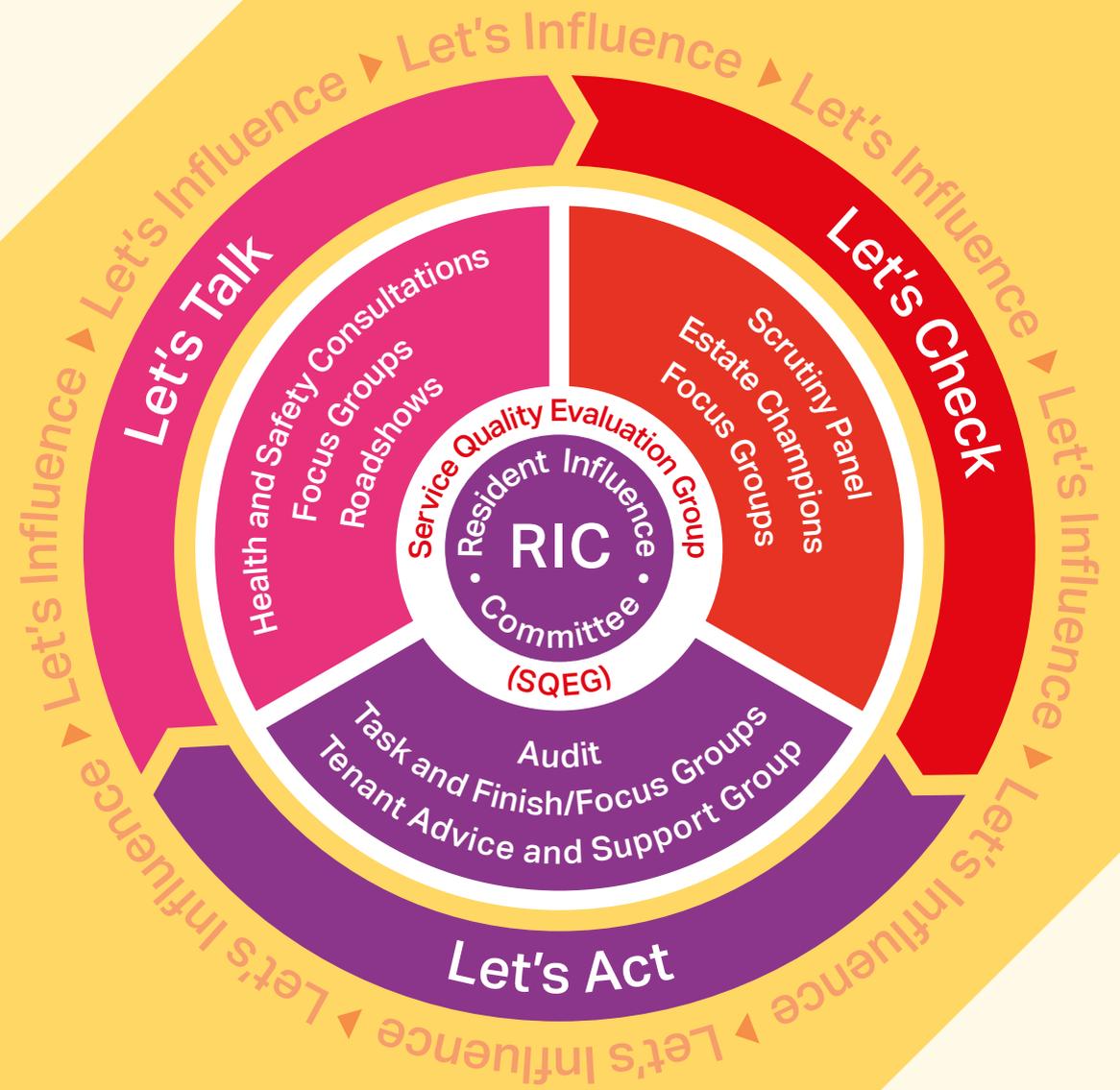
“Having attended the first meeting and discussed the plans I’m very excited that things will actually happen. The enthusiasm of staff and residents is evident, and I’m really looking forward to the future.”

David Adams,
Service Quality Evaluation Group member



Changes to our resident involvement structure

Over the past 12 months, we evolved our resident engagement and influence structure, to include new resident groups and a more targeted customer involvement framework. The strengthened structure and approach increases our accountability and improves the way we seek out, listen to and act on the voice of the customer.



The four core resident groups are:

Resident Influence Committee (RIC)

This is a sub-committee of the Board and is responsible for holding emh to account and informing the Board on how emh is performing in relation to involving our customers in strategic decision-making and influencing service design, delivery, and improvement. The first meeting of the RIC took place in August and emh officers were subjected to a high degree of enquiry and challenge on performance levels and how we are hearing the voice of the customer.

Scrutiny Panel

This is a well-established customer group, which carries out independent investigations and reports its findings to the Board. Last year, the Scrutiny Panel carried out a comprehensive investigation into our complaints processes and worked

with us to develop an improvement plan. The Scrutiny Panel recently commenced their next investigation, which is centred around damp and mould.

Service Quality Evaluation Group (SQEG)

This new group includes the Head of Quality and Performance, the Policy and Compliance Team and three customer representatives, plus a Scrutiny Panel member. The customer representatives work in partnership with the Policy and Compliance Team to examine key performance and improvement data related to consumer standards, Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), complaints, customer involvement, feedback and lessons learned.

Tenant Advice and Support Group (TSAG)

The main remit of the newly named Tenant Advice and Support Group (previously Resident Action Committee) is to represent the views, concerns, and interests of emh tenants and residents. They are keen to strengthen their identity and working relationship with emh. The TSAG and emh co-hosted a 'meet and greet' pop-up event at Whetstone Parish Hall on 1 August, which was attended by 56 residents from 15 different areas. The event was very successful and residents had the opportunity to speak directly to emh officers from a range of departments. The group also heard from many residents who expressed an interest in joining. Similar TSAG pop-up events will take place in different areas to ensure the TSAG and emh meet as many residents as possible.



To find out more about resident influence, our online groups and Estate Champions, please contact Customer Voice Officers, Anne Phillips or Jackie Sykes:

E. anne.phillips@emh.co.uk

E. jackie.sykes@emh.co.uk

Supporting you



More households than ever are feeling financial strain. *We are here to help.*

Evictions

We have maintained a supportive approach to arrears collection and are only using eviction as a last resort when tenants do not engage with us to agree a payment plan.



8

ASB related evictions



1,557

Residents offered support by the Money Matters team



£2.3m

Claimed in grants and additional benefits

Money matters

Aged only 19, Mr H has had a lot to contend with in his short life.

Two heart attacks, 25% lung capacity and being his grandpa's carer meant working was difficult. Following his grandpa passing, we've been able to help him apply for Limited Capability for Work-Related Activity (LCWRA) and personal Independence payment (PIP) which was turned down initially, but then made application to tribunal and was successful. This will allow Mr H time to grieve, concentrate on his health and maintain his house.



Worried about paying your rent?

- ▶ Contact our Income team on 0300 123 6000
- ▶ Your Income Officer can talk through any concerns with you
- ▶ If you are in arrears, they can work out affordable re-payment plans with you
- ▶ They can make referrals for extra support, such as to our Money Matters team

Our Money Matters team can:

- ▶ Work with you to increase your income and reduce expenditure
- ▶ Help you to apply for benefits
- ▶ Talk you through a budget plan
- ▶ Give you advice to help manage your debts



Residents Support Fund

In 2022/23 we secured a £10,000 grant from EEM Ltd, a national consortium supporting the public sector in achieving cost and efficiency savings in their procurement activities.

We matched this grant, creating a £20,000 pot to support eligible residents with money towards equipment or services to support employment, training or basic living needs. This could include school uniform, white goods, car repairs for essential travel, travel to college or food vouchers if a local food bank isn't able to help.

Before launching the fund, we consulted our residents and received more than 1,500 replies - 89% agreed with our proposal.

Our Money Advice team have helped 16 residents benefit from the fund (to end of March 2023).

***A total of 84 residents have been supported with the fund (to end of September 2023).**



84

Residents
supported by
the fund*

Helping people out of homelessness

Our specialist housing team has worked with Leicester City Council, and our development team colleagues to refurbish Maidstone House in Leicester with money funded by the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Project budget (RSAP).

This scheme meets the needs of individuals who have slept rough or to prevent them from sleeping rough.

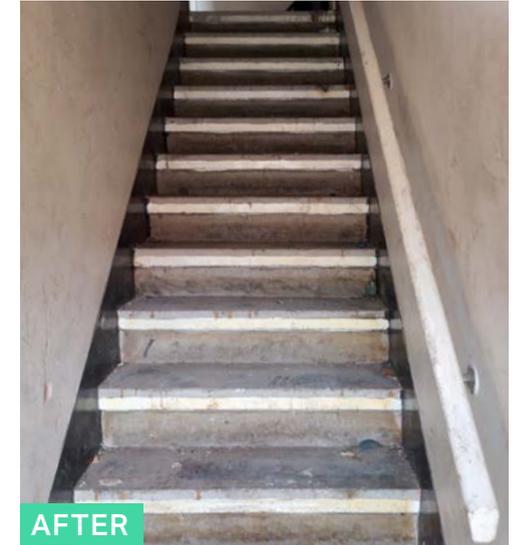
This RSAP project provides seven self-contained fully furnished flats which allows Leicester City Council to offer additional move-on accommodation, which is a bridge between a tenancy and hostel accommodation.



Becky Clarke, Assistant Manager Specialist Housing, Andrew Humberstone, Head of Specialist Housing and Julie Turner, Homeless Prevention and Support, Leicester City Council.



BEFORE



AFTER

Tenancy Sustainment Service

Within Erewash, our successful Tenancy Sustainment Service has been expanded to allow us to help up to 40 residents. The scheme helps customers to keep their home, by helping them settle in or deal with tenancy threatening hoarding issues.

The specialist housing team is also working alongside our development team colleagues and Leicestershire County Council to develop a specialist housing scheme in Whetstone.

If approved, the scheme will consist of eleven one-bed self-contained, independent apartments and a two-bed adapted apartment.

The aim is to create and maintain a balanced, sustainable, and vibrant community for residents at Henson House, in Whetstone.

Creating community



We want your community to be safe, clean and welcoming.



59%

of residents are satisfied with our approach to handling ASB



296

Estate Champions recruited



64%

of residents are satisfied we make a positive contribution to their neighbourhood



18.9 days

Average re-let times

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

"The allocation officer is amazing, she kept me informed all through the process, she helped me with all my forms and even sent me reminders of appointments as she knows I suffer with my memory. She went way above and beyond and I am so grateful for her and hope she is recognised for her helpfulness."

We received a complaint from a resident in Loughborough regarding her neighbour slamming the door repeatedly throughout the afternoon. The complainant felt that this was revenge after she'd previously reported them to the Police for anti-social behaviour. The nuisance was affecting the complainant's mental health. The perpetrator then called in to discuss the allegations made against her, she denied these allegations and made counter

allegations against the complainant. Contact was made with both parties who were offered mediation. This was accepted and a referral was made to Mansfield Mediation. Mansfield Mediation soon became involved and after a series of calls to both parties the case was able to be closed. The Mediators advised that the matter is concluded as both parties have agreed actions and changes that need to be made.





Tackling ASB



There were 1,269 new ASB cases reported during the year.

We have continued to focus on non-legal remedies, such as self-help, guidance, and early contact to help each neighbour understand the behaviours reported and the impact that these may have. We have promoted independent mediation companies to help both parties agree a way forward ensuring that we all live side by side harmoniously.

In 2022 we carried out four evictions for anti-social behaviour due to drug related offences and serious nuisance in Erewash, North West Leicestershire, and Charnwood. We obtained 5 injunction orders to prevent nuisance, annoyance alarm and distress in relation to high-risk anti-social behaviour issues, where all other options have failed. In some of these cases we were able to work with the Police to put in place closure orders, in some cases we obtained a power of arrest.

Estate Action Days

By the end of March 2023, we had recruited 287 Estate Champions.

The Estate Champions complete surveys which are shared with the Grounds Maintenance, Property and Communities teams to ensure the relevant team investigated and responded to the issues raised. This has resulted in a reduction of outstanding issues on our estates and increased customer satisfaction from **84% to 90.8%.**

Data from the surveys has been used to look at trends and reoccurring issues, this helps the Communities teams plan for the Estate Action Days where we work in partnership with other key agencies.





Zone improvements

Zone improvement applications were considered by a Customer Panel during the year, which included three resident panel members. Some of the projects approved include:

- ▶ A new pergola and seating area at one of our sheltered schemes.

This has had a positive impact on customers wellbeing as previously, they did not have a communal area for residents to sit and spend time together.

- ▶ Regeneration of a scheme that was reporting ongoing anti-social behaviour.

We removed bushes, and replaced them with turf and new trees which has opened the area. This has made customers feel safer in their community.

- ▶ Funding for a new metal gate was approved which secured an alleyway that was being used for anti-social behaviour and fly tipping.

Letting homes

We look to re-let homes within 27 days, to minimise empty properties between one tenant moving out and the next moving in.

This ensures those needing a new home aren't waiting longer than necessary, and that we maximise the rent income from our properties so it can be reinvested in homes and services. In 2021/22, the re-let time was 33 days – it is now down to 18.9 days.

We have worked closely with our local authority partners to use Choice Based Lettings systems (CBL) so those most in need are allocated homes that are affordable and which are the right fit.



Helping the community

A valued community resource has received a helping hand, thanks to our partnership project to create an outdoor space.

We approached the Kirk Hallam Community Centre last year to ask how we could support the local community using it. We teamed up with Travis Perkins to makeover the community space. Colleagues from emh Property Services and Grounds Maintenance

teams worked over a number of days to clear the area and install a gazebo, barefoot walking path and seating.

The space is already in welcome use by those attending stay and play sessions, the outdoor playgroup, lets sing, community storytelling sessions, a gardening group and the outdoor café space. Local Cubs, Brownies, Scouts and Rainbows can also make use of it.



Examples of neighbourhood action throughout the year

April 2022

The team met Michael Ellis, MP for Northampton North at Abington Lodge for a coffee morning.

May 2022

An 'estate action day' was held in North West Leicestershire where teams spoke to residents and helped remove rubbish. Estate action days were also held in Loughborough, Sutton in Ashfield, Long Eaton, and Erewash.

A 'ward walk' was held in Loughborough along with the local MP, where our teams went door-knocking to help us better understand the priorities of local residents.

June 2022

An estate walkabout was held in North West Leicestershire as well as Charnwood, with key partners.

July 2022

An estate action day was held in Ilkeston. We litter picked and left the area looking clean!

August 2022

A community fun day was held at Agar Nook in Coalville with lots of fun, games, and activities.

September 2022

A walkabout was held in Wellingborough in Northamptonshire where we completed our repairs and grounds audits.

November 2022

We visited our sheltered housing schemes to inspect communal facilities.

December 2022

We hosted Christmas parties in our sheltered schemes which had a great turn out and everyone had a lot of fun.

January 2023

The sheltered housing team visited Prior Park, our much-loved scheme in Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

Safe, well-maintained homes

Each year we invest more than £13m in improving your homes, from new kitchens and bathrooms to minor repairs to energy-efficiency works, keeping you warm and well.



33,447

Repairs completed



94%

Repairs completed on time



90.8%

Customers satisfied with repairs

External Wall Insulation



"My home definitely feels a lot warmer and it looks lovely from the outside."



1,370

Homes decorated (external)



116

Roof replacements



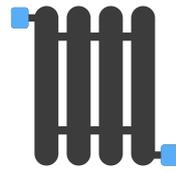
582

New kitchens installed



£3.5m

Secured to improve energy efficiency of homes



562

New heating systems installed, including 33 air source heat pumps

Keeping you warm and well

Residents in areas of the East Midlands are benefitting from £3.5m in funding awarded to emh group by the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).



"My house looks lovely and I can 100% tell the difference inside the property. I couldn't be happier."



This is the second time emh has been awarded SHDF funding, with the previous Wave 1 award being used to improve 73 homes in Blaby.

Residents living in these homes are now enjoying the benefits of the external wall insulation, sharing that their homes feel warmer with thermostats not needing to be set so high, and that their properties now retain heat long after the heating has been turned off.

Included in the first wave of the SHDF project were 16 bungalows in an over-55's, sheltered housing scheme in Enderby. These homes have been treated with energy efficiency measures including external wall insulation, loft insulation and improved ventilation systems, helping these homes to achieve EPC ratings of Band

C. The result is that the homes are warmer, more energy efficient and comfortable to live in.

Thanks to our successful delivery of these works, we have been granted additional funding to allow us to carry out similar works to a further 17 properties in 2023/24. We have also successfully bid for further funding via the SHDF Wave 2.1. Using this funding, another 320 properties will benefit from energy efficiency measures during 2023/24 & 2024/25.

Our programme of air source heat pump installations has continued during 2022/23. This has included continuing works as part of Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD 2) - an initiative funded by the Government via Blaby District Council and Erewash Borough Council.



Planned maintenance

The planned works programme significantly increased again for 2022/23 to reflect our commitment to investing in your homes.

We spent £15.4m on replacement boilers, kitchens, roofs, bathrooms, doors and windows, external painting, energy efficiency works and upgraded door entry systems. This work included external painting of 1,370 properties and 496 new bathrooms.



496

New bathrooms installed

Damp and mould

Our work to ensure any damp and mould is tackled in our homes continues.

Our damp and mould task team of eight operatives remains in place, and our strategic damp and mould group continue to meet monthly.

We aim to contact our customers within 48 hours of reporting damp and mould and aim to carry out a visit within five working days to take immediate remedial action and determine what follow-on works may be required.

If you have damp and mould, please report it to us at: dampandmould@emh.co.uk



The BIG Project

During the past year, The BIG Project team has worked with colleagues and customers to review and redesign the repairs service. They have engaged with more than 900 customers through a variety of channels to hear your thoughts and feedback about what isn't working well.

An implementation plan is in place and we are already trialling these changes in some areas:

- ▶ **Leaving customers with 'What next cards'** - so you have details of the work to be carried out and know what the next steps are.
- ▶ **A new 'No Access' process** - if an operative arrives at a property and there is no answer the planning team will attempt to make contact with the resident before the operative leaves the property.
- ▶ **A new 'Follow-on Work' process** - we want to complete as many jobs as possible on the first visit. But if a repair needs a second visit, we will give you an appointment whilst we are at the property.

- ▶ **Using our dynamic scheduling system** - to make sure we are scheduling jobs efficiently to improve performance and the customer experience.
- ▶ **Customer Service Centre is now offering appointments to customers** - so you can book a repair more easily.

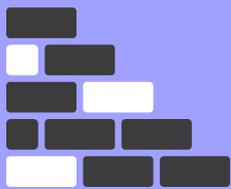
This is just the start on improvements to the way we offer our repairs service. We will be measuring the success of these changes in the test and learn period and listening to feedback from customers and colleagues to make sure we get this right and will roll out changes that have proven successful.



New homes

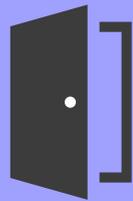


The rising cost of living means more people are seeking affordable housing. As a key Government-backed developer, we are committed to building quality homes that meet the needs of the region.



490

Homes developed across 15 local authority areas



135

Shared ownership homes sold



7

Passivhaus homes built

"Things really began to unravel for us when our landlord announced that they needed to sell the rented home we'd lived in for several years. When we saw emh's advert for shared ownership, we realised that this could be the perfect solution to our worries.

"We were both blown away by how simple the process was! In such a short space of time, we've moved from a one-bedroomed flat at the top of a shared building to a house with three bedrooms. It seemed impossible to imagine before, but moving to The Sidings has improved our lives immeasurably."

Gareth Hardman + Christina Allen, emh Shared Owners



Growing to meet the region's needs



We've kept up our development programme to continue building the right homes in the right places. Despite increasing mortgage rates, sales of shared ownership homes have remained strong.

The 490 homes completed last year included 22 properties on behalf of Ashfield District Council – helping the local authority to restart council homebuilding.

Thanks to our role as a Homes England Strategic Partner, we've delivered a range of housing types and tenures across 15 local authority areas. Our schemes in 2022/23 include three village sites to provide 40 new rural homes.

A strong example of our development work is The Villers, in South Leicestershire. This scheme includes 77 new, mixed tenure, affordable homes. The development offers 27 homes available for social rent, 39 for shared ownership and a supported living block of 11 flats with a communal hub and staff office.

We are also developing 46 new, mixed tenure, affordable homes on a former brownfield site in Long Eaton. The new homes include 29 homes for affordable rent, and 17 for shared ownership. Work has recently begun on the site, and the homes are expected to be completed in winter 2024. The £10m scheme is being funded and delivered by emh, with a grant contribution from Homes England.



Improving services



Our new approach to complaints and larger resolutions team is helping resolve concerns and complaints more quickly and efficiently, and we're ready for the new Tenant Satisfaction Standard.



Concerns raised

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

2022-23: 4,423

2021-22: 6,886



Complaints received

2022-23: 981

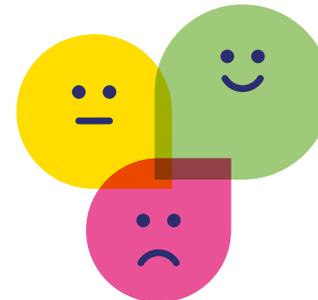
2021-22: 1,937

Tenant Satisfaction Standard

From April 2023, all landlords are required to collect, process and publish data around 10 technical and 12 customer perception measures.

We are ready for this change and in September/October 2023 our first independent Tenant Satisfaction Standard survey will be sent to residents. We will report the results on our website, in newsletters and in the next annual report.

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) survey is aimed at helping improve standards for people living in social housing, by providing visibility, letting tenants see how well their landlord is doing, and enabling tenants to hold their landlord to account.



Emh residents can feedback on overall satisfaction, performance around repairs, communal areas, safety, anti-social behaviour, complaints, and engagement. Your views are crucial to hear and will help us to improve. Likewise, if you are happy with the services we provide, the survey will let you know.

In November we asked residents to score us on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures to help understand current performance. This told us our overall satisfaction was 69% with the highest satisfaction being with the safety of our homes (81%) and the lowest with complaints handling (33%).



981

Complaints received



9.9

Average no. of days to respond to a Stage 1 complaint
(After acknowledgement email sent)



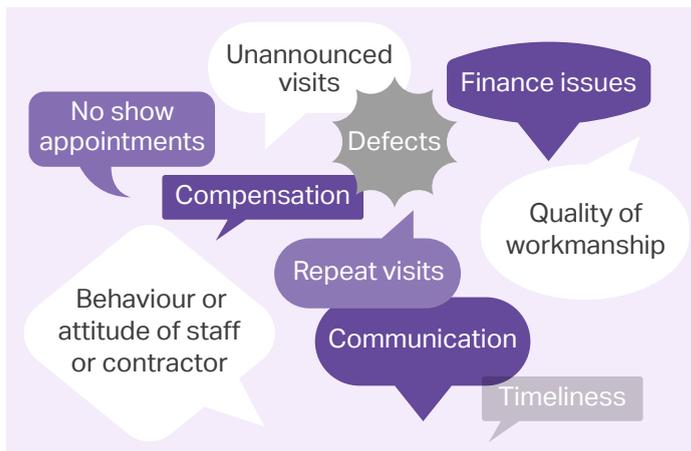
25.3

Average no. of days to respond to a Stage 2 complaint

Complaints

43% of complaints received were related to repairs. Our 'BIG Project' is already working to address these, with trials underway which aim to improve communication and how we handle situations where things can't be fixed at a single, first appointment. 15 Stage 1 & 2 complaints reached the Ombudsman.

Breakdown of complaint types:



[Click here for our Compensation Policy](#)



A simple guide to our complaints process

Immediate resolution

(Concerns that are resolved within 48 hours in agreement with the customer. If unresolved within this timescale concerns are escalated to a Stage 1 resolution.)

We will ask you for details of your concerns and discuss what you would like us to do to resolve them.

We will aim to resolve your issue(s) during your initial contact with us. If this is not possible, we will progress your complaint to the next step.

Formal complaint

Stage 1 resolution

We will investigate your complaint and keep in touch with you throughout the process. We will provide you with a response within 10 working days of your complaint being raised.

Our response will summarise your initial complaint and outline what we have done or plan to do to resolve your complaint.

If you are not happy with our proposed resolution, you can ask us to progress your complaint to the next step.

If we have not heard back from you within 6 months of our Stage 1 response, we will close your complaint.

Formal complaint

Stage 2 panel hearing

We will acknowledge your request for a Stage 2 escalation. We will ask you to clarify why you believe your complaint wasn't fully addressed in Stage 1 and what outcome you would like.

Your complaint will then be investigated by a head of service or director. We will write to you within 20 working days of your request to escalate your complaint, detailing the final decision.

Here's some details on key complaint areas and what we are doing about them:

Lessons Learned – Gas Repairs

Issue	Root cause	Action taken
Communication	Failure to keep residents informed around appointments, delays in receiving parts, cancellations.	Improved communication pathways to ensure the customer is kept informed and introduction of a what happens next card when a part is ordered.
Timeliness of boiler repairs and replacements	Process for approving replacement boilers was too long.	The process for approving replacement boilers has been improved with a clear time-scale set to inform customers.
Repeat visits	Incorrect parts being ordered.	Training has been carried out to ensure the right part is ordered at the first visit.

Lessons Learned – Reactive Repairs

Issue	Root cause	Action taken
Timeliness of completing damp and mould jobs	Operatives unable to access property and repair job subsequently cancelled.	Damp and mould jobs will not be cancelled after no access and efforts to gain access will continue until after the job is completed.
Communication around next available appointments	Tenants not always informed of the next available appointment in a timely fashion.	Operatives will aim to inform the tenant of the next appointment before leaving the property.
Ownership of outstanding jobs	No clear lines of ownership of outstanding repair jobs.	Supervisors have been given clear ownership of the management of any outstanding jobs in the area that they cover.

Improving quality and performance

Shaping our Futures

The emh Quality and Performance team formed during this year, and consists of the Head of Quality and Performance, Policy and Compliance Manager, Customer Voice Manager and a host of hard-working team leaders, officers, advisors, and administrators.

Together, the team is responsible for: ensuring compliance with the social housing consumer standards, supporting the delivery of high-quality services for our customers, managing and resolving complaints and making sure emh hears your voice.

So far they've introduced new quality management processes to strengthen how we monitor quality, compliance and service performance, started a project to better measure and monitor improvement activities and reviewed how complaints are handled.



Thank you to the residents who have contributed to this report.

If you have any suggestions that will help us improve the report next year, please let us know.



To save you time, you can contact us for a same-day response via our online service [myhomeonline](#) or via [Facebook](#).

[myhomeonline](#) provides you with the flexibility to view your rent account at any time day or night. You can also directly communicate with specialist teams within emh for a number of queries.

If you need an immediate response or would like to understand more about [myhomeonline](#), please call **0300 123 6000** to speak to one of our friendly advisors.