



ANNUAL REPORT for...
Tenants and Leaseholders

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DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS

2010



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Contacts

Tenants Advice & Repairs Service

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251 8998 – Fax
252 7011 – TextBox
tenantsadvicecentre@leicester.gov.uk

Leicester City Council General Enquiries

252 7000 – Telephone
255 9289 – Fax
252 7011 – TextBox
customer.services@leicester.gov.uk
www.leicester.gov.uk

Benefit Fraud

238 5262 – Telephone

Council Tax

252 7005 – Telephone

Crimestoppers

0800 555 111 – Telephone

Emergency Electricity

0800 056 8090 – Telephone

Emergency Gas

0800 111 999 – Telephone

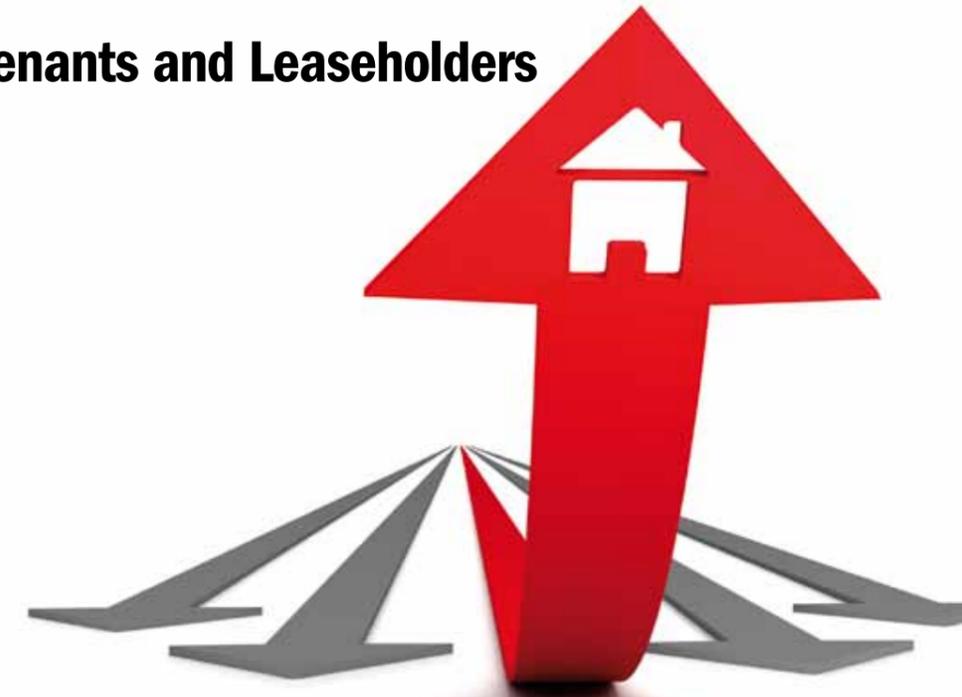
Housing Benefit

252 7006 – Telephone

Leicestershire Police

222 2222 – Telephone
07624 818 901 – Emergency
text number for people who are
hard of hearing or speech impaired.

Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders



WELCOME to the latest edition of the Annual Report which gives you an overview of how well the Housing Service is performing. It also tells you about the new initiatives which have been launched during the last year and plans for further improvements in the future.

- ✓ changed the way people are allocated properties. 'Leicester Homechoice' enables tenants to have more choice and control over where they live as they are able to bid on the properties they are interested in
- ✓ employed and trained almost 100 young people who have been out of work for more than six months, through the Future Jobs Fund. Neighbourhood Improvement Operatives have been improving the physical appearance of our estates through clearing overgrown areas, pruning bushes, painting railings and communal areas, litter picking and removing rubbish
- ✓ 97% of our properties now reach the Decent Homes Standard with work being undertaken on the remaining properties by December 2010
- ✓ introduced the 'Paypoint' scheme which enables you to pay your rent by cash at a variety of outlets
- ✓ Leicester is now amongst the top performing councils for collecting rent payments, with arrears of less than £1m (£993,370)

Work in partnership with other agencies to identify new opportunities to increase the supply of social housing in Leicester



- ✓ introduce mobile working for repairs staff and also the annual home check on all properties, to identify and undertake repairs needed
- ✓ overall tenant satisfaction with the services we provide increased by 4.2% during the last year, to 80.3%
- ✓ Leicester was chosen as a tenant involvement trail-blazer organisation by the Tenant Services Authority

We have had a busy year and we are currently implementing the final stages of the organisational review which saw the merger of Housing Management and Repairs into one service. The aim of this was to create a more integrated and efficient housing service that meets tenants' needs. We have:

- ✓ streamlined services to avoid duplication, including the merger of the two call centres
- ✓ front-line staff have been given more responsibility to enable them to carry out their roles more effectively
- ✓ extended the operation hours of the housing service - 8.00am - 8.00pm Monday

Dave Pate
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING SERVICES

Cllr Paul Westley
CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

to Friday and from 8.00am - 1.00pm on Saturdays. An emergency cover will be available at all other times

- ✓ Estate Management Officers will manage 600 properties and all issues on their 'patch' and will visit all tenants, at least once per year
- ✓ the service will operate across six management areas, each headed by an Area Manager
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- ✓ all staff are currently receiving further training on customer care. Throughout the report you will see target signs which show an area of improvement we will be working on. Also, we have set performance targets which have been set lower than usual, to allow for the time taken for the implementation of the organisational review. You will see however, that we are forecasting solid performance results.

We will be receiving less money from the Government, which means we will need to find more savings over the next few years. However, our commitment is to ensure you receive high quality services and we look forward to working with you to ensure this happens.

Message from the Tenants' Panel

We hope you find the Annual Report interesting, as we have been working on this project for nearly ten months to ensure it contains the information you need and want to know. We have agreed the content and design of the report and have carried out an assessment of the housing service, to identify what it is doing well and also areas for improvement. We will be monitoring progress throughout the year.

There are many ways you can play a role in helping to improve services for all tenants and leaseholders, so if you have a little spare time why don't you think about joining us?

To save money, all tenants and

leaseholders will only receive a summary of the report, however if you would like the full report please contact the Service Improvement Unit on 0116 2527007 or at siu@leicester.gov.uk

BEST WISHES from the Tenants' Panel



The new structure of the Housing Service

The structure of the Housing Service has been changed to operate in six management areas. The table below shows the Manager for each area.

Estate	Manager
St Mathews St Marks	Ela Krychowska-Hall
St Peters Charnwood	
Saffron Eyres Monsell	Ian Stapleton
Rowlatts Hill Humberstone	Chrissie Field-Toon
Braunstone	Ellen Watts
Beaumont Leys Mowmacre	John Thomson
New Parks	Marie Murray

There are two District Managers, Chris Burgin and Suki Supria, who co-ordinate services and ensure consistency across the city. The specialist teams dealing with rent arrears, void properties and property lettings are managed by Martin Clewlow (Head of Service for Property Services)

There are also Heads of Service roles for Technical Services (Pete Stephens) and Planning and Major Works (Ian Craig).

Dave Pate is the Director of Housing Services.

Who gets council houses?

The Council had 22 230 properties at the end of March 2010, which also includes sheltered and supported accommodation. The table below shows the number of general need properties.

Property Type	0 Bed	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5+ Bed	Total
Houses		1	2,285	8,236	475	128	11,125
Maisonettes		2	1,265	369			1 636
Flats		4,390	1,543	39			5 972
Bungalows		2,644	156	24			2 824
Bedsits /rooms	213						213
Total	213	7,037	5 249	8 668	475	128	21,770

75 properties were sold through the right to buy initiative between April 2009 – March 2010. This compares to 64 the year before.

There are currently 8,050 people on the housing waiting list.

Size of property	Number of people on the waiting list
1 bed	3,705
2 bed	1,997
3 bed	1,816
4 bed	367
5 bed	119
6 bed	42
7+ bed	4
Total	8,050

The average rent per property type and size

Property	1 bed		2 Bed		3 Bed		4+ Bed	
	09/10	10/11	09/10	10/11	09/10	10/11	09/10	10/11
Bedsits	£39.07	£40.26						
Flats / maisonettes	£48.73	£49.97	£57.43	£58.87	£63.63	£65.22		
Houses and bungalows	£52.94	£54.26	£60.07	£61.58	£65.23	£66.86	£74.93	£76.79
Average rent all property types					2009 - 2010	£58.78	2010 - 2011	£60.25

The rent increase this year was 2.5%, compared to 3.9% last year. Leicester is now amongst the top performing councils for collecting rent payments, with arrears of £993,370. The more rent we collect, the more work we can do to improve your homes and neighbourhoods.

	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010
% of rent collected	98.64%	98.96%
Total arrears	£1.16m	£993,370

Indicator	09/10 Actual result	10/11 Target	10/11 Forecast
% rent collected	98.96%	98.8%	99.1%

Eviction is only ever used as a last resort and we do everything we can to support tenants to avoid this action. During the last year, we evicted 55 tenants (0.25%) compared to 60 (0.27%) in 2009/10.

Indicator	09 / 10 Actual result	10 / 11 Target	10 / 11 Forecast
% tenants evicted for rent arrears	0.25%	0.26%	0.25%

Debt reduction and advice workers helped 392 tenants to claim additional benefits of £958,000 during the last year.

Who are our tenants?

Leicester City Council has 25,079 tenants. There are 658 leaseholders, with 54% located in the central area of the city. We also manage 133 Homecome properties which provide good quality homes for rent, to people on the Council's housing register who meet the need for the accommodation.

Ethnicity

55.8% of our tenants are from a white background and 21.9% from other ethnic backgrounds. We still need to collect ethnicity information for 22.3% of our tenants.

Ethnicity	Number	%
Asian	2,800	11.2
Black	1,829	7.3
Chinese	30	0.1
Mixed	286	1.1
Other	546	2.2
White	13,988	55.8
Information not available	5,600	22.3
Total	25,079	100%

Gender - 59.7% of tenants are female and 40.3% are male.

Age - 24% of our tenants are aged 65 years or over

Age	Number
16-17	5
18-24	1,290
25-34	4,283
35-44	4,910
45-54	4,708
55-64	3,647
65-74	2,804
75+	3,129
Not available	303
Total	25,079



Disability

We have recorded 245 tenants as stating they have a disability which equates to 1% of the tenant population. We need to improve in the collection of this information to enable us to design our services to meet the needs of tenants and leaseholders.



Continue to collect diversity information to enable us to use this information to help identify the needs of all our tenants and leaseholders.



Positively target under-represented groups to encourage them to play an effective role in improving services.



Customer Satisfaction

Each year we undertake a satisfaction survey to see what you think about the services we provide. The most recent survey was carried out in November 2009 and satisfaction increased by 4.2% to 80.3%.

You said we had improved in the following areas:

- ✓ Helpfulness of staff
- ✓ Taking your views into account when making decisions
- ✓ Dealing with enquiries.

You said we needed to improve further in the following areas:

- ✓ The general condition of your properties



We will introduce the 'annual home-check', which means we will visit all tenants annually to carry out a check on their property and to undertake any repairs that have been identified



- ✓ Managing local estates.



Area managers will be developing local plans to identify the projects and improvements that will be undertaken to improve your local area and will be consulting you on these plans.



Indicator	09 / 10 Actual result	10 / 11 Target	10/11 Forecast
Satisfaction of council tenants	80.3%	74%	80.5%

There are various ways for you to pay your rent...

Paypoint		Pay at outlets showing the paypoint logo
Direct Debit		Ring 0116 252 7007 for a form or collect one from your local housing office
Standing Order		Ring 0116 252 7007 for a form or collect one from your local housing office
Online	@	www.leicester.gov.uk/payments This is a secure site
Phone (24 hours)		Please call 0116 252 7007 . This is a 24 hour service and is available seven days a week
By post		Use a cheque, bankers draft or postal order.
Cash		Please pay at your local office or any cash office across the city

Please allow three working days for payments to reach the Council (except for cash payments at your local office).
If you do not keep up with your rent payments you could end up losing your home.



Tenant Services Authority (TSA)

The TSA is the current regulator for social housing in England, although the Housing Minister, Grant Schapps, has recently reviewed this role.

It expects landlords to involve their tenants in the decision making process and to enable them to exercise choice over the services they receive. The aim is to ensure all tenants, regardless of where they live, receive a good quality service from their landlord.

TSA Standards

The TSA has developed five national standards for local authorities, in consultation with tenants throughout the country. Although the TSA will not be regulating leaseholder services, we have undertaken a self-assessment of leasehold services and we have developed a plan to improve services in the future.

We have appointed senior managers to each of the standards and they have undertaken an assessment of the service and developed an improvement plan, in partnership with the Tenants' Panel.

TSA Standard	What does it include?	Lead Officer
Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	Involvement and empowerment Customer service and choice Equalities and diversity Tenants with additional support needs Complaints	Chris Burgin
Home	Repairs and maintenance Quality of accommodation	Pete Stephens / Ian Craig
Tenancy	Allocations Rent Tenure	Martin Clewlow
Neighbourhood and community	Neighbourhood management Local area co-operation Anti-social behaviour	Suki Supria
Value for money	Value for money	Chris Burgin / Pete Stephens
Leasehold Management	Leasehold services	Dave Pate



The TSA requires all housing providers to produce an Annual Performance Report to tenants, which Leicester has been doing for many years.

Local Offers

All housing providers will need to talk to their tenants about developing local offers, which are designed to allow services to be tailored to what tenants want at a local level.

Our involved tenants have not prioritised the negotiation of local offers, instead they have stressed the need to complete the implementation of the organisational review first.

However, area managers will be consulting with local people on areas of the service, and the city, that would benefit from a local offer and training has been provided to staff and involved tenants in preparation for this.

Area managers have been asked to identify possible local offers, in partnership with local people, by the end of November. They will also monitor the effectiveness of any local offers in their area and will report on this in their area plans and in City Housing News.

We have also met with other housing providers who operate in the Leicester area to identify any joint working opportunities. The Beaumont Leys area has been identified as a possibility and this is being further investigated.



ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੋਵੇ ਜਾਂ ਇਹ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ (0116) 252 7007 ਤੇ ਅਡਾਲਟਸ ਐਂਡ ਹਾਊਸਿੰਗ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

How are we doing against the standards?

Tenant involvement and empowerment

✓ We have developed seven service standards that are regularly monitored by senior managers and the Tenants' Performance Panel to ensure we are providing high quality services to you. Some of our involved tenants regularly mystery shop specific aspects of the service and make recommendations for improvement.



- ✓ We offer a range of ways for tenants and leaseholders to contact us and have extended the contact hours from 8am-8pm during the week and 8am-1pm on Saturdays
- ✓ Accessible offices. 'Digitv' available in some reception areas
- ✓ Introduced an SMS texting service to contact tenants about repairs
- ✓ We regularly consult tenants and leaseholders on various issues and provide feedback using a range of methods. Staff have been trained on consultation and feedback through our 'Closing the Loop' framework
- ✓ We provide information on various issues, using a range of methods.



Develop ways for tenants to access their records on-line. Improve the information and format of the housing service website. Make more use of technology to contact and involve tenants.

- ✓ Information is available in a range of languages and other formats, upon request. We also offer an interpreters service and staff at local offices will also read documents, such as City Housing News, to tenants needing assistance, which provides a more personalised service. Straplines in multi-languages are included on all correspondence and publications
- ✓ We have introduced Leicester HomeChoice to enable tenants to have more control and choice over where they live.
- ✓ We regularly undertake satisfaction surveys on the call centre
- ✓ 82% of tenants thought it was easy to contact the housing service (May 2010)
- ✓ The two call centres took over 20,000 calls last year and although the Tenants' Advice Centre reduced the average waiting time to be answered, this increased in the Repairs call centre. The two call centres are currently merging to ensure a consistent and high quality service is provided.



To continue with the merger of the two call centres and to ensure all staff are fully trained to enable them to deliver a consistent and high quality service.

Tenants have identified the need to further improve the way we communicate with them.



Develop a Communication Strategy in partnership with tenants.

Involvement

There are a range of ways for tenants and leaseholders to help improve, plan and monitor services, ranging from stay at home opportunities to more formal meetings and events. In 2008/09 and 2009/10 almost 11,000 tenants have helped to improve services by completing surveys, attending estate inspections and other meetings and events, in each year.

Each year, tenants and leaseholders volunteer thousands of hours of their own time to help improve the housing service.

	2008 / 09		2009 / 10	
	TAC		Repairs	
	April 09	April 10	April 09	April 10
Calls taken	8181	8271	11,176	9,798
Calls abandoned	401	490	927	2,346
Average queue time (seconds)	103	50	65	137

On a scale of 1 -10 the average satisfaction score with the outcome of their enquiry was 8 (10 being very satisfied, 1 being very dissatisfied) (May 2010).

	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010
Number of tenants and leaseholders involved	10,867	10,888
Volunteer hours contributed	9,042	12,962
Financial value of volunteer hours Based on the number of hours contributed at the minimum wage	£47 047.41	£73,520.46

- ✓ Tenants and leaseholders are supported to get involved and all travel and caring expenses are re-imbursed. Training and development opportunities are made available to ensure involved tenants and leaseholders have the necessary skills to participate effectively.
- ✓ The Tenants' Panel has helped to review our current approach to tenant involvement and also to design a new structure which reflects the new working arrangements for the housing service.



Implement the new approach to involvement and consultation including publicising the new structure and providing training to staff and involved tenants and leaseholders.

- ✓ The Tenants' and Leaseholders' Performance Panel regularly meets with senior managers and elected members to monitor and scrutinise the housing service. This role needs to be developed further to enable panel members to play a more effective role.

	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010
Satisfaction that tenants views are being taken into account by your landlord	55% satisfied	56.6% satisfied



Develop the scrutiny role of tenants and leaseholders in monitoring the performance of the housing service, through training and development.

Tenants and leaseholders have contributed to the following improvements:

- ✓ Developed an action plan for improving the way we deal with anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Made recommendations on allocating funding for local projects
- ✓ Worked with staff to identify local priorities;
- ✓ Reduced repairs target times
- ✓ Reviewed documents (letters / leaflets / posters) to ensure they are tenant friendly and fit for purpose. They also help to produce City Housing News, deciding what information needs to be included.



Involvement and consultation costs (including staff time)	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010
	£127,626.95	£91,751.75

Complaints/compliments/suggestions

We have a clear complaints policy that is widely publicised, however this is not applied consistently across the city.

	April 2009 – February 2010
Number of complaints received	1,843
Number of complaints upheld	1,083

Develop a consistent approach to handling complaints and undertake refresher staff training.

If you feel something has gone wrong, then please let us know. We will try and put things right as quickly as possible. You should have a reply from us, with the outcome of the investigation, within 10 working days, outlining any action that will be taken as a result.



When you are reporting a complaint we will need to know:

- ✓ what the complaint is about?
- ✓ when the problem happened?
- ✓ what you want us to do to put things right?
- ✓ your contact details.

Please also let us know when you have been pleased with the services you receive or if you have a suggestion about how it can be improved. Contact us on **0116 252 7007**.

How are we doing against the standards?

Home

We have a requirement to meet the Decent Homes Standard by December 2010 and Leicester has set its own standard, which exceeds the Government target. Only **1.3% (296)** of our properties are currently non-decent and these will be brought up to standard by the deadline.

- ✓ Emergency repairs – 97.02% (19,123) were completed within 24 hours.
- ✓ Urgent repairs – 94.54% (25,183) were completed within 10 days.
- ✓ Non-urgent repairs – 93.37% (37,031) were completed within nine weeks.

The Council has a legal duty to carry out annual gas servicing of all our gas appliances. We also undertake checks on gas appliances owned by tenants. We must gain entry into every property each year and if we are unable to do so we will gain forced entry and cap off the gas supply until the check has been undertaken. If we need to gain forced entry, the tenant will be charged for this.

Number of gas services completed 2009/10	20,319	99.4%
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- ✓ 1,278 kitchens and 807 bathrooms were fitted during the last year. 96% of tenants were satisfied with this work

	2008 / 09	2009 / 10
Kitchens	976	1278
Bathrooms	894	807

- ✓ We have introduced new mobile working practices that have resulted in first time access to properties improving.

Progress with the implementation of mobile working and annual Home-checks.

- ✓ First time completion rate for repairs has increased from 70% to 90%.

Satisfaction with the general condition of our properties has fallen from 75.9% (2008 / 09) to 72.1% (2009 / 10) and satisfaction with the ways we deal with repairs and maintenance has fallen by 1.2% to 67.2%. In response to this, working arrangements will change as part of the organisational review. Our building maintenance workforce will be allocated to one area, so that they become more familiar with both the properties and tenants in their area.

To implement the new localised working arrangements.

- ✓ The Council spent an average of £22.66 per property on maintenance costs in 2009 / 10 compared to £21.92 in 2008 / 09.
- ✓ Appointment slots have been reduced from four to two hours to reduce the time tenants need to wait in their homes.

To implement the new localised working arrangements.

- ✓ 1,500 new kitchens and bathrooms
- ✓ Re-wire 1,050 homes
- ✓ Carry out electrical wiring testing at 500 homes
- ✓ Re-roof 70 homes
- ✓ Install 850 new central heating boilers
- ✓ Fit new upvc windows and doors to 115 properties
- ✓ 1,400 disabled adaptations to homes
- ✓ Install 30 home security packages
- ✓ Install 10 new door entry systems to communal areas
- ✓ £900,000 to fund the switchover from analogue to digital TV communal aerials.

Increase opportunities for tenants to be involved in developing the repairs service.



Bu yayını okumakta yardıma gereksinim duyarsanız ya da farklı bir formatta olmasını isterseniz lütfen Yeti kinler ve Barınma bölümüyle (0116) 252 7007 numaralı telefonda ileti me geçiniz.

اگر آپ اس اشاعت کے بارے میں مدد چاہتے ہیں یا اس کو کسی اور صورت میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی اڈلٹ اینڈ ہاؤسنگ ڈیپارٹمنٹ سے

پر رابطہ قائم کریں۔ (0116) 252 7007

Tenancy

✓ We have introduced Leicester HomeChoice to give tenants more control and choice over where they live. There were 21,359 bids made between 21 April 2010 - 27 June 2010, of which 92.28% were made using the internet.

Other ways to make a bid include include:

- ✓ kiosk at the Property Shop;
- ✓ automated phone line;
- ✓ text messaging;
- ✓ Housing Options;
- ✓ Digitv.
- ✓ Leicester HomeChoice has its own dedicated web pages for tenants which were developed in partnership with tenants



Introduce a system to manage HomeChoice refusals and an appeals process

- ✓ There is a clear policy in place for dealing with under and over occupation of properties.
- ✓ A mutual exchange policy is in place and if you would like more information on how to exchange your property please contact your local office.
- ✓ We let 1 453 properties in 2009 / 10 compared to 1,420 in 2008 / 09.
- ✓ Re-let times for empty properties have increased from 27.8 days (2008 / 09) to 42.1days in 2009 / 10, mainly due to the asbestos and re-wiring work needed.



Investigate ways to reduce re-let times and develop an action plan in partnership with tenants.

Indicator	09 / 10 Actual result	10 / 11 Target	10 / 11 Forecast
Average re-let times	42.1 days	25 days	30 days

✓ Satisfaction with the general condition of our properties has decreased by 1.7% to 63%.



Identify reasons for the decrease in satisfaction levels with the condition of our properties and identify ways to improve this, in partnership with tenants

✓ Leicester City Council is building new houses for the first time in 30 years.

Management costs per property	2008 / 09	2009 / 10
	£13.18	£12.69

68.5% of our tenants receive some housing benefit.

Neighbourhood and community

- ✓ Area Plans have been developed to identify and address local issues, in partnership with tenants.
- ✓ Satisfaction with the area as a place to live has fallen by 4% to 72.7% and satisfaction with communal areas has also fallen. As a result, the housing service put in a bid to the Future Jobs Fund to employ 100 neighbourhood improvement operatives. The environment of the estates and communal areas have improved dramatically through this work and we have received positive feedback from local residents.
- ✓ 975 estate inspections were undertaken across the city to identify local issues, in partnership with tenants.



To continue to improve satisfaction with the local estates and communal areas.

- ✓ Localised service delivery introduced.
- ✓ £1.67 million invested in local neighbourhoods, in consultation with tenants.
- ✓ We work in partnership with probation, through the Community Payback Scheme, to improve the physical appearance of estates.
- ✓ We are responding to the high levels of worklessness in some of our Areas. Priorities have been identified and will be included in future Area Plans.
- ✓ We have clear anti-social behaviour (ASB) policies and procedures in place that have recently been reviewed in partnership with tenants.
- ✓ 1,909 cases of ASB were reported in 2009 / 10 with the main types being noise (694), conflict with neighbours (606) and verbal abuse (88).
- ✓ Satisfaction with the way we deal with ASB increased by 5.7% during 2009 / 10 to 68.7%.

Indicator	09 / 10 Actual result	10 / 11 Target	10 / 11 Forecast
% tenants who consider the way ASB has been dealt with has improved following LCC involvement	68.7%	70%	70%



Improve communication with tenants reporting ASB. Undertake staff training on ASB once the organisational review is complete.

✓ We work in partnership with the Leicester Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (LASBU) to resolve serious cases of ASB.



Review partnership working with LASBU.

How to report anti-social behaviour

To report anti-social behaviour please call the Tenants' Advice and Repairs Service on 0116 252 7007.



Value for money

Our aim is to provide cost-effective and quality services to all our tenants and leaseholders. We have been working to identify the costs associated with delivering the different parts of the housing service and comparing this with other similar organisations. However, we need to do more work in this area.

We have developed an efficiency plan, which is currently being implemented. As stated earlier, we will be receiving less money from the Government, which means we will need to find more savings. We will be working with tenants to identify smarter ways of working, which means delivering high quality services with fewer resources.

73% of tenants feel the money they pay in rent provides good value for money in terms of their home and the services we provide. This has decreased by 2.3% since 2008 / 09.

- ✓ Tenants have helped to allocate funding to local projects



To develop a value for money strategy, in partnership with tenants.

- ✓ Expenditure has been prioritised on service areas and local budgets have been developed.
- ✓ Value for money assessments have been carried out for procurement of contracts.



To develop a clear understanding of the cost and quality of our services to ensure we make the best use of available resources, to meet tenants' and leaseholders' needs.

Average weekly management cost per property in 2009 / 10 was £12.69 and maintenance costs were £22,92 per dwelling.



To develop involvement opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to influence service charges.

To undertake further benchmarking activities to ensure we are offering a comparable service to other similar organisations.

What have we done to improve value for money?

- ✓ Merger of the housing management and repairs services.
- ✓ Merger of the two call centres.
- ✓ Extending the operational hours of the service.
- ✓ Halved the repair timescale a tenant has to be in.
- ✓ Halved the appointment time for a repair.
- ✓ Extension of mobile working.
- ✓ Creation of local repairs teams.
- ✓ Developing home working opportunities for staff.
- ✓ Closure of the Humberstone depot.
- ✓ Reducing staff sickness level.



Leaseholders

- ✓ All involvement opportunities are open to leaseholders.
- ✓ Leaseholders have their own newsletter 'Spotlight on leaseholders' which focuses on the issues of relevance to them.
- ✓ The City Housing News newsletter is now also sent to leaseholders and Homecome tenants.
- ✓ The Leaseholder Handbook has recently been reviewed and updated in partnership with leaseholders.
- ✓ There is a quarterly drop-in session for leaseholders to meet with staff to discuss issues of concern to them.



- ✓ We undertook our first satisfaction survey of leaseholders in 2009 and 56% of leaseholders said they were satisfied with the service they receive. We are currently undertaking our survey for 2010 and results will be available in November 2010.
- ✓ Leaseholder Forum meetings have discussed leaseholder rights and responsibilities, buildings insurance, service charges and repairs issues.

The next meeting of the forum will take place on Monday 22nd November 2010 at the Peepul Centre at 7pm.

75 properties were sold in 2009 / 10 which included 62 houses, two bungalows and 11 flats / maisonettes.

	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010
% increase in service charge	4%	2.5% There was no increase for district heating charges



To develop involvement opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to influence service charges.

To identify one lead officer to co-ordinate leasehold activities.



How do we monitor the services we provide?

We have recently developed a framework for managing the performance of the service. The service has been aligned to the TSA Standards and each senior manager takes the lead on one service area.

We regularly discuss the performance of the service with the Performance Panel and identify areas of improvement. As stated earlier, we want to develop this role further.

The Panel has recently reviewed which information it would like us to monitor. They have said they would prefer us to monitor a smaller amount of useful information that we take action on, rather than looking at everything and not achieving any real improvements to the service.

Each quarter, the area managers look at how tenants have helped to improve the local area and services and from this information we are able to say how many people are involved, how many hours were volunteered by tenants and how much we spend on involvement activities.

We undertake a range of satisfaction surveys across all areas of the service and the results



are used to identify further improvements.

We benchmark our performance against other similar organisations and where they are performing to a higher level, we talk to them about how they are delivering their service so

that we can learn from them. We also receive requests for similar information from other organisations who have adopted our way of working.

Organisation	% non-decent homes	Average management costs	Average maintenance costs	Average re-let days	Average SAP rating*	% rent collected
Leicester	3%	£12.69	£22.66	42.1	83	99%
Bristol	7%	£13.58	£14.76	26	66	96%
Derby	0%	£19.27	£15.09	29	70.95	Not available
Nottingham	33%	Not available	£20.60	38.48	61	Not available
Sheffield	16%	£19.00	£15.00	39	72	92.8%
Stoke	10%	Not available	£14.46	37	63	99.3%

* SAP rating refers to the efficiency of properties in heating and insulation. Ratings are scored from 1- 100 and a higher number is better.

How you can help to improve services

There are many ways for you to get involved to help us to improve services either by completing surveys in your own home or by attending local events, such as estate inspections and meetings.

We also hold formal groups and meetings that help to monitor the performance of the service, identify areas that need improvement and make suggestions about how this can happen.

All tenants who get involved will be given support to assist them to gain the skills they need, to play an effective role in improving services. We also re-imburse childcare and other caring expenses and will arrange transport for all those attending meetings and other events.

Our involvement and consultation arrangements are currently being reviewed and once they are in place, we will publicise this in our service newsletter.

Further information

If you would like further information on the Annual Report, the services we provide or would like to get involved in helping to improve services please contact the Service Improvement Unit on 0116 252 7007 or at siu@leicester.gov.uk



If you need help reading this report or require it in another format, such as Braille, please contact us on 0116 2527007.