

Annual report

to council tenants & leaseholders
2024 to 2025



This report gives information about housing services between April 2024 and March 2025 and plans for this year, 2025/26.



Councillor Gill Williams

Welcome to the housing annual report for 2024/25

Over the past year, we've been working hard to make improvements to our council housing, ensuring that residents receive high quality service and safe homes. Your feedback has helped shape our priorities, and we're excited to share what we've achieved — and what's coming next.

Building safety has been a major focus and will continue to be at the forefront of everything we do, to ensure we provide safe, high quality homes.

As you'll see in the 'Value for money' section, we've increased the percentage of council housing income invested in repairs and improvements to your homes – up to 64% in 24/25 from 58% the previous year.

The Regulator of Social Housing's report, published in August, highlighted a number of areas in need of improvement.

Since then, we've introduced a string of measures to tackle the concerns raised and work is being carried out to bring about improvements in fire safety, water safety and electrical safety.

We have also taken action to reduce the backlog of routine repairs by increasing contractor capacity, improving efficiency through first-time fixes, and focusing on better communication with tenants.

Like many councils with a largely ageing housing stock, we face challenges in modernising our homes and we recognise there is still more to do to meet tenant expectations.

We would like to thank residents for your continued support and your feedback on our services, which we are using to shape how we work.

We're also continuing to provide much-needed additional council homes and are pleased to report that work has started on the Moulsecomb Housing and Community Hub scheme.

This is the biggest single council housing development in the city for years and will provide more than 200 new council homes and new community facilities.

Other current projects include the conversion of former offices in Palace Place in the city centre into 11 apartments, which will be used as temporary homes for people in housing need.

A range of other developments to provide new council homes are also in progress, with more in the pipeline.

Councillor Gill Williams,
Cabinet Member for Housing

Our housing

As of 31 March 2025, we have 12,181 council homes made up of:

7,093

flats

597

studio flats

4,063

houses

251

bungalows

177

maisonettes


Highlights and performance

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

We are committed to improving the safety and quality of our homes. The Regulator for Social Housing's 'Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard' requires all registered providers of social housing to collect and report annually on their performance using a core set of defined measures. These are known as the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Our Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 24/25 will be submitted to the Regulator of Social Housing in the summer, and published later in the year on our performance webpage at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housing-performance

We will also provide this information in a future edition of Homing In.



Our 2024/25 tenant satisfaction survey found that **76% of tenants felt they were treated in a fair and respectful way**, and **53% of tenants felt their views were listened to and acted upon.**

A full report of the tenant satisfaction survey will be available later in the summer at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/star-survey and in a future edition of Homing In.

Building safety

Our priority is to provide safe, good quality homes, and improving building safety across all homes has been a key area of work through 24/25.

The comprehensive **Fire Risk Assessments** (FRAs) we carried out across the year identified more than **8,000 remediation actions** across all property types.

With more than **80%** of the actions either best practice recommendations or low-risk items, our focus is on the highest priority areas. By March 2025, we'd completed almost **2,000**, with **6,204 actions outstanding.**

We're also working to make sure all council homes have **working smoke detection**, with **97.7%** of homes completed as of March 2025.

We completed **4,626 domestic electrical safety tests** in 24/25. More than **75% of homes are now in line** with our recently introduced 5-year testing cycle.

We carried out **253 water risk assessments** during the year.

We are **fully compliant** across gas safety, asbestos management, carbon monoxide detection and lift safety.

Another key focus has also been building safety in our 8 large panel system blocks, with discussions with residents starting on the future options for those buildings.

Repairs and maintenance

The Repairs Helpdesk

answered a total **66,159** calls during 2024/25.



During **2024/25** we completed work to bring a total of **499** empty homes back into use.

Repairs backlog

We appointed contractors to work alongside our Repairs and Maintenance Team on our backlog of repairs. Together, they have been working hard and have completed an average of around **3,500 repairs every month**. The number of older jobs outstanding continues to fall, and we are beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels of service delivery.



We would like to thank you for your continued patience and understanding while we catch-up.



Apprenticeship programme

Our Repairs and Maintenance Team were recognised for their commitment to apprenticeships at the council's graduation ceremony last year. We currently have a total of **25 apprentices** across the service in both trade and office roles, exceeding our goal of 20.

Damp and condensation

We've spent **£0.763m on cavity wall insulation** to help keep homes warmer in the winter and prevent condensation.

During **2024/25** we completed **2,200** repairs following reports of damp and mould.



We have begun installing environmental sensors to help us speed up identifying the causes of damp.

If you have problems with damp in your home, please report them to our Repairs Helpdesk by calling **01273 294409**,

emailing repairs.helpdesk@brighton-hove.gov.uk or online at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/repairs

Gutter clearing

Our contractors cleared gutters in **3,401 homes** through the gutter cleaning programme.

Improving supply of building materials

We've set up a new contract with builders' merchant Huws Gray for supplying materials to repair your homes. We now have a dedicated materials store in the city to restock our vans.

The contract will help increase the number of repairs completed on time and first time, support the city's economy, and will ultimately reduce the number of journeys taken to source materials, helping to reduce our carbon footprint.

Sustainability and energy efficiency

Over the past year, we've installed solar panels in 400 council homes, which we

estimate could help reduce energy bills by a total of £100,000 across the homes every year. We're on track in this 3-year programme to install solar panels on 800 homes.

We've also been working in partnership with EDF to install solar batteries in 22 homes. This government-funded trial tests storing energy and selling it back to the national grid, while improving housing energy efficiency.

At Manoj House in Brighton, old oil systems were replaced with air source heat pumps, providing reliable heating and hot water for 38 flats.

These energy efficiency projects help cut costs, lower emissions, and make the city's homes more sustainable.



Increasing the number of council homes



Our New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme is building much-needed new council homes for rent.

We've now built more than 250 new council-rented homes through the programme, and have projects underway to deliver a further 400 new homes across a number of sites in the city – including work starting on an exciting development of more than 200 homes and a community hub in Moulsecoomb.

We also have planning approval in place for a further 292 new homes, and sites in the pipeline capable of delivering more than 150 homes.

In addition, our 'Homes for Brighton & Hove' partnership with Hyde has delivered 346 new affordable homes so far, including 177 new council-rented flats. We're planning a further 500 new homes through this partnership.

Other housing projects include the conversion at Palace Place in central Brighton to provide 11 one-bedroom apartments for temporary accommodation, as well as acquiring 21 homes at St Aubyns in Rottingdean.

You can find more information about our New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/nhfn

Buying back homes

Through the Home Purchase Policy we bought back a total of **74** former council homes to let to people in housing need in 2024/25.

Sold

Ensuring our housing meets the changing needs of a diverse population

Moving home

We let **584** homes, including: **140** new homes and **444** previously occupied homes. This was **159** fewer than last year's total.

To Let

As of 31 March 2025, **131** of our homes were empty, down from **137** at the same point last year.

The average time to re-let an empty home was **85 days** over the year, including the time needed to carry out major repair work.



This is down from an average re-let time of **108 days** the previous year.

Seniors Housing

We have **878** seniors housing homes available to people over 55 years old. We continue to work with residents and partner organisations to offer a diverse array of community activities, including chair-based exercises, singing classes, art groups, film screenings, outings, digital support, and community gardening.

Residents can enjoy daily or weekly verbal contact with their scheme manager using our daily call service, ensuring consistent communication and support.

We've made more than **500** referrals to supportive health, care and wellbeing services, significantly contributing to our residents' ability to live independently.

More than **80%** of our seniors housing residents have taken part in their annual review with their scheme manager. These reviews are crucial for updating emergency contacts, discussing services, and identifying needs to support independent living.

Around a quarter of residents engaged in residents' meetings with their scheme manager, fostering a strong sense of community and collaboration.

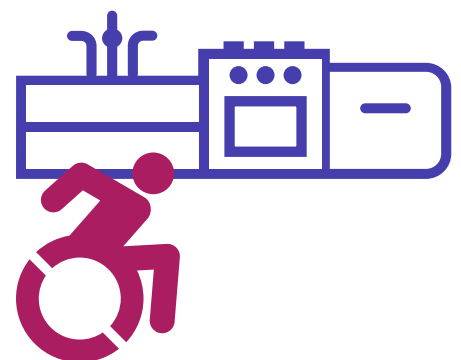
We also carried out fire drills in all our schemes with communal fire routes, ensuring everyone is prepared in case of an emergency.



Residents singing group, meeting at Brooke Mead

Adaptations

We completed **479** minor adaptations and **232** major adaptations to council homes, ensuring these properties support residents to live their lives as independently as possible.



Our landlord services

Housing Customer Services

Our Housing Customer Services Team answered nearly **22,000** calls and replied to over **26,000** emails. The team also managed **824** gas access cases to help make sure all our homes remain compliant on gas safety, **90** referrals for home adaptations, and **375** requests from tenants wanting to improve their homes.

The team answers enquiries and manages car parks and garages on housing land, which brought in more than £1.2 million income last year.

They handled **130** Subject Access Requests, making sure tenants got copies of their personal records as required by data protection rules.

Estates Service

The team clean **818** blocks weekly and **76** properties monthly, covering a variety of housing types. In 2024, we achieved a **96%** cleanliness rate across all properties under our care.

The Estates Service Team completed **9,115** jobs in 2024/25, including dealing with **2,842** cases of fly-tipping.

They completed **601** tasks to remove items from communal areas, ensuring compliance with fire safety regulations. To improve fire safety, a team has been set up to make more frequent visits and keep communal areas hazard-free.

Income collection

Our rent collection rate is currently **93.12%**

As of 31 March 2025, there was £5 million unpaid rent – **7%** of the total rent due.

During the year, **163** referrals were made to Money Advice Plus, helping tenants access quality debt advice and maximise their income. The Housing Income Management Team supported tenants to access £78,425 in Discretionary Housing Payments.



We've also worked with the Money Adviser Network to improve access to specialist advice for tenants experiencing financial difficulty, this enables them to access instant debt advice.

With more than 900 tenants migrating over to Universal Credit this year, we've set up a process to support residents with the rent element of their claim, with an emphasis on early contact and support.

Your community, your neighbourhood

Our Tenancy Sustainment Team supports tenants at risk of losing their homes with benefit claims, safeguarding, home improvements, and moves to more suitable accommodation. The team also supported **61** residents with hoarding issues.

Our Tenancy Team opened **108** new cases and worked with **1,937** households in the year, including **785** new anti-social behaviour cases. The team issued **29** Community Protection Warnings, **13** Community Protection Notices, and obtained **11** 'Closure Orders' to provide

long-term relief for neighbours.

They handled **419** cases of tenancy breaches, including:

- untidy gardens - **102**
- interior property conditions - **149**
- leaseholder breach – **19**

The team also looked into **15** fraud cases involving tenants and leaseholders, which led to **10** homes being reallocated to households that needed, and were entitled, to this accommodation.

Responding to and learning from complaints and feedback



We received **838 Stage 1** complaints relating to housing landlord services, compared to a total of **775** in 2023/24.

You can see the full report on our website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/hmcsi-annual-report

There are some types of complaints that we can't accept. This year we have refused to accept complaints for the following reasons:

- Where the same matter had already been considered at all stages of the internal complaint procedure, where the issue was not part of an ongoing situation, no new matters were raised and where no new evidence was provided which may have affected the previous outcome.
- Where the outcome sought by the customer was solely compensation for damages, whether personal injury or unquantifiable financial loss, and no additional matters were raised.
- Where a more appropriate route of appeal or challenge was available (Data Protection or information governance issue, leaseholder service charge dispute, complaint solely about the conduct of elected members, matters which can only be decided by a court such as whether discrimination has occurred) and where no additional matters were raised.
- Where customers wished to complain that senior members of staff had not replied personally to their emails, despite the customer requests having been considered and responded to through the relevant process (such as a complaint, a Subject Access Request or a service request).

Types of complaints received

- Repair/maintenance/improvement of property condition **578** (620 in 2023/24)
- Anti-social behaviour complaints **17** (26 in 2023/24)
- Staff conduct **70** (21 in 2023/24)
- Failure to take action **19** (13 in 2023/24)
- Estate management services **31** (12 in 2023/24)
- Unhappy with service delivery **49** (12 in 2023/24)
- Re-housing **8** (6 in 2023/24)
- Disagree with policy/procedure **15** (5 in 2023/24)
- Delay in providing outcome **13** (5 in 2023/24)
- Other tenancy matters **38** (55 in 2023/24)

How we handled your complaints

We investigate all complaints to see where we need to take action to improve our services.

- **35% were upheld** (21% in 2023/24)
- **14% were partially upheld** (34% in 2023/24)
- **51% were not upheld** (45% in 2023/24)
- **131 complaints were not resolved at Stage 1 and escalated to Stage 2** (99 in 2023/24)

Stage 1

73% responded within 10 working days (84% in 2023/24)

Stage 2

57% responded within 20 working days (49% in 2023/24)

Service improvements from complaints

Following a review of complaints and other customer feedback, we've started work with residents and staff to improve key service areas through collaborative workshops.

These focused on reducing delays in day-to-day repairs, enhancing repair quality, preventing missed appointments, and improving diagnostics and communication.

We also looked at:

- **Improving complaints handling** to ensure more empathetic responses and consideration of individual vulnerabilities
- **Addressing concerns about health and safety to help improve living conditions**, including anti-social behaviour, damp and mould, electrical safety, noise nuisance, asbestos and pest infestations
- **Improving customer service and communication** by ensuring clear information, a respectful tone, better staff conduct, and consistent updates

These improvements reflect a continued commitment to delivering a more efficient, transparent, and responsive service for tenants.

We've introduced several key service improvements over the last year, including:

- **A new Housing Online system to improve digital access to our services** and help simplify the process of reporting repairs. We received 3,146 reports through the form throughout the year.
- **Recruiting a dedicated neighbourhood team** to carry out regular visits to our estates. This will allow for early identification and resolution of issues, and a more responsive service.
- **Strengthening our response to managing noise nuisance** with revised procedures and closer working with colleagues in Environmental Health.
- **Restructuring our cleaning services**, with a 4-week rota for high-rise buildings and optimised van routes to reduce travel time.
- **A clearer case review process for addressing anti-social behaviour** to ensure a more robust and accessible service for residents.

The number of complaints decreased in the latter part of the year, and we're committed to continue improvements based on your feedback to increase efficiency, transparency and the proactive community support we provide.

How we used the insights from complaints, and other feedback

Following analysis of complaints, we ran a series of co-produced workshops with tenants and staff focussed on 4 key themes:

- 1. Day to day repairs** - addressing delays, improving repair quality, preventing missed appointments, enhancing diagnostics, and ensuring better communication.
- 2. Complaints handling** - focusing on empathetic responses, addressing all concerns, offering fair redress, and considering individual vulnerabilities.
- 3. Health and safety** - tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour, damp and mould, electrical safety, noise nuisance, asbestos, and pest infestations.
- 4. Customer service and communication** - improving information clarity, fostering a respectful tone, enhancing staff conduct, and providing consistent updates.

Eighteen tenants and 14 members of housing staff took part in these workshops, they will be used to form the basis of our **'Creating Great Homes Together'** continuous improvement plan.

Compliance with the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code

There have been some occasions this year where we have unfortunately not been able to meet compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code.

These results relate to cases during 2024/25:

- Maladministration in our handling of a resident's reports of multiple leaks resulting in damage to the property. There was also a service failure in our handling of the related complaint.
- Maladministration in our handling of reports of roof leaks, major work and reports that the property was not fit to let at the start of the tenancy. There was also maladministration in our associated complaint handling.
- Maladministration in respect of our response to a resident's reports of anti-social behaviour, reports of discrimination, including a failure to make reasonable adjustments, concerns about the communal cleaning and the handling of the associated complaint.
- Maladministration in our handling of a resident's reports of anti-social behaviour and the associated formal complaint.
- Service failure in our handling of a resident's concerns about asbestos linked to plastering work and reports of repair issues relating to electrics and a kitchen worktop.
- Service failure in our handling of repairs to the resident's roof and the handling of the associated complaint.
- Service failure in response to the resident's reports concerning asbestos, damp and mould.
- Service failure in our handling of a resident's inclusion on the client of concern register.
- Severe maladministration in our handling of a resident's reports of a roof repair and leak resulting in damp and mould, and service failure regarding reports about bathroom flooring.
- Maladministration in our handling of a resident's reports of water ingress.
- Maladministration in our handling of a resident's reports of a leak coming from the property above, communication on our process regarding the resident's insurance claim and the associated formal complaint.

We apologise on every occasion we've got things wrong and review each case to identify where we need to improve.

For information on our complaints process and our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Code to see how we comply, visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/HOCCSA

Brighton & Hove City Council's complaints policy and procedure is available at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/complaints

Housing Ombudsman



Residents dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 2 complaints can escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman offers

an advice, mediation, and complaint resolution service.

Visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Email info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
or call **0300 1113000**.



Looking ahead

Over the coming year, we will continue to work hard to improve the safety and quality of our council homes. We've set aside a further £15 million investment for our building safety programme in 25/26.

We want to be a great landlord and your views are playing a key part in this. We're actively listening to tenants to ensure your needs and perspectives shape service improvements.

We explained that workshops took place in the spring where residents and housing staff generated over 60 ideas for a continuous improvement plan, called 'Creating Great Homes Together.

We're aiming to publish the plan later in the summer, and details will be included in a future issue of Homing In.

If you'd like to register your interest to participate in future workshops, please contact the community engagement team on **07717 302986** or email **communityengagement@brighton-hove.gov.uk**

Other key areas we'll be focussing on include strengthening our complaints handling process, to ensure we address concerns promptly and effectively to improve resident satisfaction.

We will also be working to ensure our housing services are easy to access, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of tenants.

We want to improve ways to keep residents informed and engaged and build trust with residents through honest, open communication and accountability.

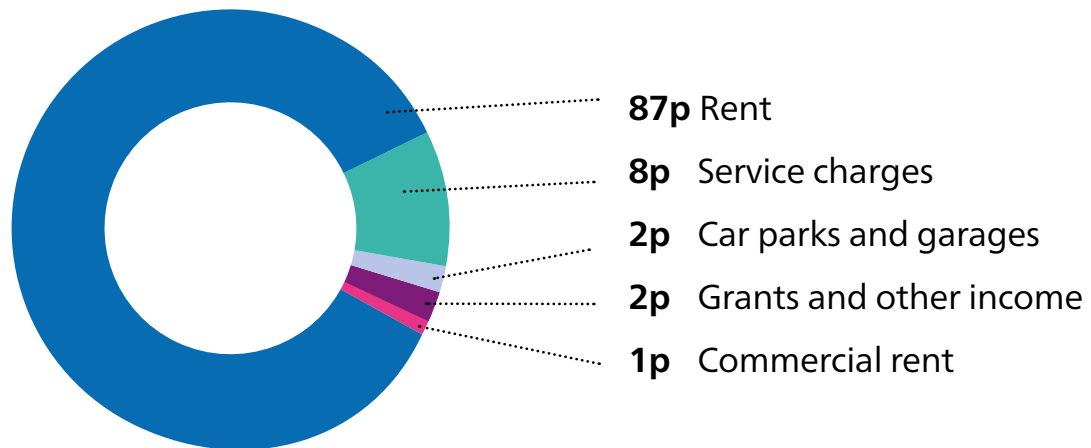
We will use your feedback to continuously refine services and improve our service and keep you updated in Homing In and in next year's annual report.

Thank you for your continued support.

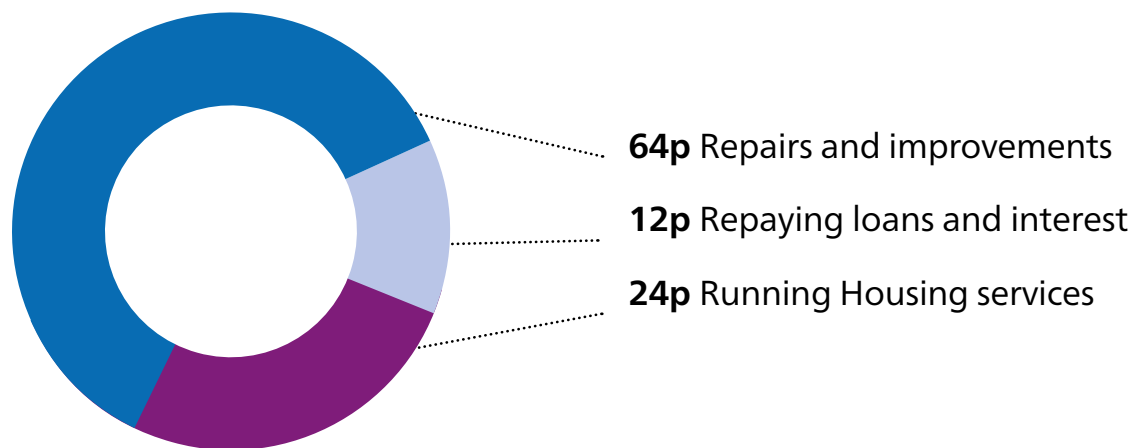


Value for money

Where every £1 of our income came from



How every £1 was spent



Total income £79.418 million

Total expenditure £76.135 million

The difference in income of £3.283 million has been added to reserves in the Housing Revenue Account to fund future investment in your homes.

Funding for new homes £30.1 million

- **£20.5 million** from borrowing
- **£5.3 million** from capital receipts
- **£3.3 million** from grants
- **£1.0 million** from reserves

If you have any comments on this annual report or there's anything you'd like to see in future editions, we welcome your feedback. Please contact us at:

Mail to: housing.performance@brighton-hove.gov.uk

 [X.com/bhhousing](https://x.com/bhhousing)

 facebook.com/BHHousing

Or you can write to us at: **Housing Performance,**
Housing Centre, Unit 1 Fairway Trading Estate, Eastergate Road, Brighton, BN2 4QL.