

annual report

2023

2024

believe
housing

hello

It's been five years since believe housing unveiled its colours and our ambition to create a life without barriers.

In that time, our dedicated colleagues have been committed to improving homes, building new homes, supporting customers with welfare benefits, accessing employment and training, and investing in our communities.

All of this has taken place against the backdrop of rising inflation, above average energy prices, and the ongoing impacts of the cost of living crisis.

We continue to be committed to improving customers' lives by providing healthy and affordable homes. And we know of the real impact that having a strong foundation can have within our communities.

Looking back to see how our services have performed across 2023-2024, it's clear to see that our work is much broader than bricks and mortar.

Below you can find key and information on how we have performed during the last year.

Alan Smith
Chief Executive

the year in numbers



Looking after more than **18,000** homes, we've carried out **74,567** repairs, retrofitted environmental works on **845** homes, and completed **208** new homes.

We've awarded **£268,397** in community funding, and supported customers to receive **£1.6m** in welfare benefits.



And we've engaged with **107** customers in-person as well as receiving feedback from **6,642** customers through our surveys.

neighbourhoods



75%

of customers believe we make a **positive** contribution to neighbourhoods



82%

of customers believe we keep communal areas clean, safe and well-maintained

safer neighbourhoods



67%

of customers are satisfied with our approach to handling antisocial behaviour



114

cases where we took legal action

2,720

cases opened

2,585

cases closed

lettings

8,772

people applied through Durham Key Options, with 71,761 bids placed overall

4,221 applications for housing were made and joined the register



1,465

new tenancies including:

30

relets – Rent to Buy

1,349

relets – affordable and social



86

first let – affordable and social

customer contact



208,068

calls answered by our customer hub

25,167

emails received by our customer hub

72%

calls resolved at first point of contact

assets and investments

1,094

fire stopping actions



5,589

stock condition surveys completed



845

properties retrofitted through environmental works

390

boiler and heating upgrades



50

external and environmental improvements



714

kitchens fitted



293

bathrooms fitted

customer satisfaction



engaging with our customers



supporting our communities



84

grants of £500
awarded to 80
organisations or
community groups

33

grants of £1,000
awarded to
organisations or
community groups

12

grants of £10,000
awarded to
organisations or
community groups

6

grants of £20,000
awarded to
organisations or
community groups

Our funding unlocked **£118,124** of match funding

repairing and maintaining homes

74,567

repairs completed

4.1

out of 5 satisfaction

15.1

days to complete
repairs

90.77%

repairs completed
within timescales

93.9%

repairs completed
first time

17,832

gas services in
99.97% of our homes

We carried out:

2,996

electrical
safety checks

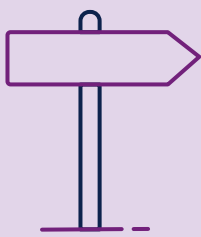
2,940

damp and mould
work to homes

supporting our customers

£1.6m

in welfare benefits
received by customers
through our support



£33,180

in heat and eat
vouchers issued

£9,708

of energy
vouchers issued

148

people supported
into employment



3

customers joined
the business through
New Start

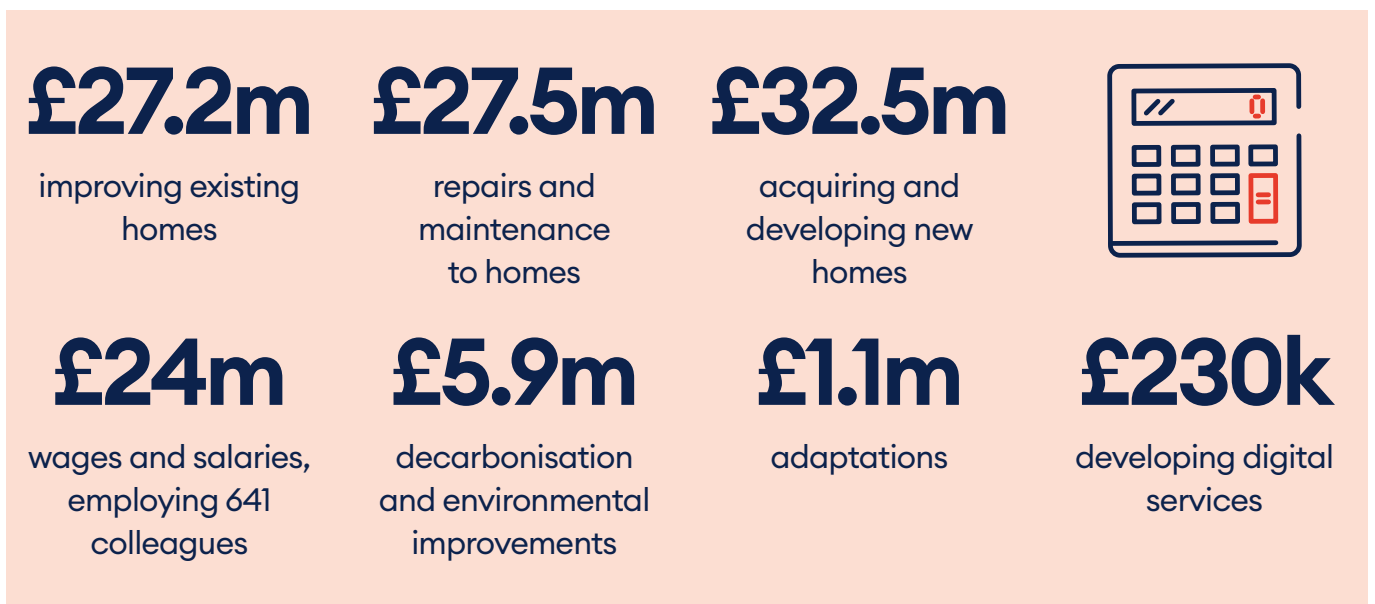
9

people supported to
access volunteering
opportunities

development

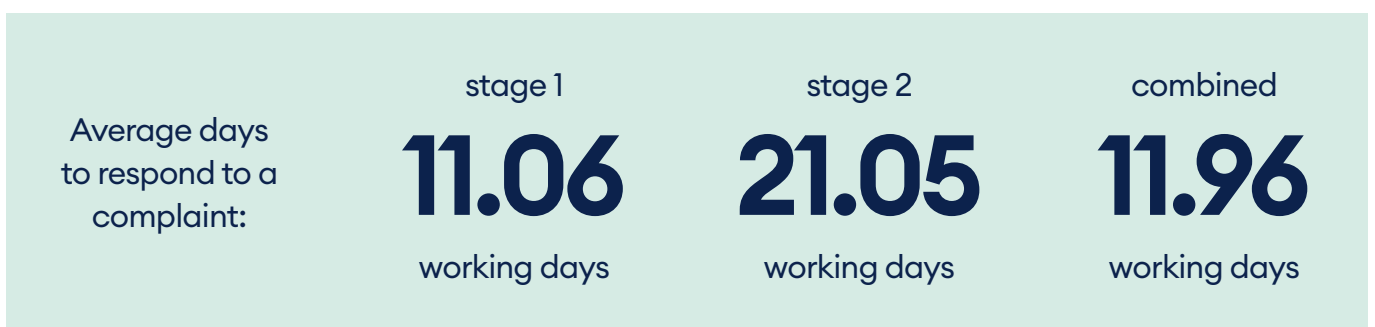


how we spend our money



You can visit our website to read all of [believe housing's financial reports](#).

complaints



76.61%

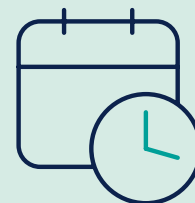
responded to within timescales: (203 out of 255)

68%

responded to within timescales at stage 1 (10 days)

67%

responded to within timescales at stage 2 (20 days)



6

housing ombudsman determinations

Top two areas for complaints:

responsive repairs

complaint handling

36%

satisfied with how complaints are handled

Every year we complete a self-assessment of our compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code and publish this on our website to show the work we’re doing to provide an effective complaints service. You can see our latest version [here](#).

Complaints say:	Examples:	Planned actions:	Expected outcome:
We don’t always communicate effectively with our customers.	When repair work is delayed or further work is required, we don’t always keep our customers updated.	Implementation of a robust ICT system. Simplified processes to ensure our colleagues are better equipped to communicate effectively with customers.	Delivery of services that customers can trust, and expectations are met.
We don’t always deliver what we promise.	When someone raises a concern with us and we set an agreed action, we don’t always check that the action is complete, and that the customer is satisfied with the outcome.	Implementation of audits for complaint handlers. Implementation of a robust ICT system. Increased satisfaction surveys to be sent to customers.	An increase in satisfaction around complaint handling and a reduction in complaint escalation. Delivery of services that customers can trust and assurance that we care.
Sometimes services take longer to deliver than expected.	During busy periods some of the services we offer are not delivered within our own set timescales. For example, fencing repairs.	During busy periods, we will consider other contractors completing the work on our behalf. Strengthened communication for customers if delays may occur.	Customer expectations are met. A reliable service where quality of service is not impacted.

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