

# Tenant Topics

Newsletter for Two Rivers  
Housing Tenants

**Annual  
Review**  
inside this  
issue

## Meet Hayley our next Chief Executive!

Find out a bit more about  
Hayley on page two

In July, we announced the appointment of Hayley Selway. She will become our new Chief Executive and will join us in December 2023.

Hayley joins us from Cardiff Community Housing Association (CCHA), where she has been Chief Executive since 2019. Over the last five years, she has helped CCHA become a top performing housing association in the heart of the Welsh capital.



See  
back page for  
your chance  
to win a  
£15 voucher!

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**tworivers**  
HOUSING

## A bit more about our new Chief Executive

As Hayley prepares to join us in December, we thought you'd like to know a bit more about our new Chief Executive.

When it comes to housing, there isn't much Hayley hasn't done!

Throughout her career, she has focussed on delivering improvements, building strong, customer-focussed organisations, and delivering meaningful tenant engagement. She has led teams in the transformation of repairs and maintenance services, delivering new homes, and improving tenant services.

During the five years she has been at Cardiff Community Housing Association, she has created a housing association that puts tenants right at its heart. She has embedded high standards across the organisation, ensuring that her team works closely with tenants to deliver the best results.

Before taking the Chief Executive role at CCHA, Hayley held senior leadership roles at Taff Housing Association, Tal Calon Community Housing, Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council and Blaenou Gwent County Borough Council.

Hayley will join us in December, where she will have a handover with our current Chief Executive, Garry King, before he steps down early next year.

## Get out and get active!



Being active is great for your physical and mental health. It can help manage stress, ease joint pain and boost your energy levels.

With so many fitness apps and diets around, getting more active can feel a bit overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be! Just 20 minutes of moderate exercise a day can make a difference to your health and wellbeing. Here are some top tips to help you get started.

1. **Find something you enjoy:** You are more likely to stick to something if you enjoy it.
2. **Track your progress:** Set yourself a goal and track your progress against it. This could be as simple as taking 5,000 steps a day or as adventurous as swimming the width of the channel in a month!
3. **Find a buddy:** Exercising with others is more fun and you can challenge each other too.
4. **Get into the habit:** Set some time aside to be active and stick to it to help build a healthy habit.
5. **Reward yourself:** Set your goals and reward yourself for achieving them.

For more ideas on getting active, visit the NHS website: [www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/how-to-be-more-active](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/how-to-be-more-active)

## Halfway there!

**More than 500 new homes delivered in our communities**

In 2018, we pledged to build 1,000 new homes in our communities by 2028. Earlier this year, we took handover of the 500th home since making that promise. That's 500 families that now have a warm, safe, affordable home within our communities.

But the team isn't done yet!

Between April and July 2023, we have taken handover of 48 new homes and there are plenty more to come later this year.





## Star tip

The closing date for applications to be our Tenant Director is **13 October 2023.**



# Could you be our next Tenant Director?

We are looking for a passionate tenant, Shared Owner, or leaseholder to join our Group Board as a Non Executive Director.

This is an important role that helps keep customers at the heart of our organisation. As a Non Executive Director, you will work with our Group Board and the wider Two Rivers Housing team to share the thoughts and opinions of our customers, help improve our services, and drive changes that benefit our customers.

You'll act as an ambassador for the thousands of families that live in our homes and make sure that decisions are made with them in mind.

This is a paid role with an annual fee of £4,000 (plus expenses). For that you will be expected to prepare for and attend Board meetings, share your own experiences and those of other tenants with us and constructively challenge the way we do things.

It's a great opportunity to gain experience at Board level and develop your own skills.

You will find more information about the role on our website: **[www.tworivershousing.org.uk](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk)**

If you are interested in applying, please get in touch with our community engagement team by calling **0800 316 0897** or emailing **[communityengagement@2rh.org.uk](mailto:communityengagement@2rh.org.uk)**.

## Be part of the Tenant's Voice and earn up to £150\* in shopping vouchers

We are looking for people with a passion for social housing, who want to make a real difference to their community.

- Do you have great ideas on how we can improve our services?
- Do you want to learn new skills and gain valuable experience?
- Are you passionate about improving things for all our customers?

If so, we want to hear from you!

Tenant's Voice will work with our team to review and improve our services, co-design new services, and help make sure tenants remain at the heart of our organisation. This is an exciting opportunity for

people that want to help drive change for the benefits of our customers and communities.

As a thank you, we'll provide up to £150\* in shopping vouchers for your help and training and support to develop your skills.

Interested? You'll find more information on our website:

**[www.tworivershousing.org.uk/about-us/tenants-voice](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk/about-us/tenants-voice)**

Or give our community engagement team a call to find out more: **0800 316 0897.**

\*£150 is subject to being an active member of Tenant's Voice, which includes attending meetings and undertaking work on behalf of tenants. It will be paid annually.

## Star tip

Applications to join Tenant's Voice close on **6 October 2023.**





# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

## Housing Ombudsman Determination July 2023

Following an investigation of a complaint made by one of our tenants, the Housing Ombudsman Service has issued a severe maladministration in relation to our record keeping.

The complaint involved an anti-social behaviour issue between tenants.

We would like to apologise for the impact this has had on our tenant and would like to reassure anyone experiencing anti-social behaviour that we take all contacts seriously.

Dealing with cases of anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes is often complex. It takes time to gather the evidence and understand the root cause of the issue. In this case we acknowledge that the way in which we recorded the issues raised affected our ability to understand and see the bigger problem. It also caused delays in the action we took to put things right and we accept that we missed agreed deadlines.

We have met with and apologised to the tenant involved in person and will continue to work with them to ensure that the issue is fully resolved to their satisfaction.

We have learnt from this case and reviewed our processes, including how we record and report cases of anti-social behaviour. This will make it easier for our team to identify patterns of behaviour and spot recurring problems. Given the impact anti-social behaviour can have on our tenants and communities, we have also invested more resource into this specialist area.

Alongside this we have delivered additional training to our customer facing teams. This will ensure that they understand our anti-social behaviour policy and the actions they must take to record and address this in our communities.

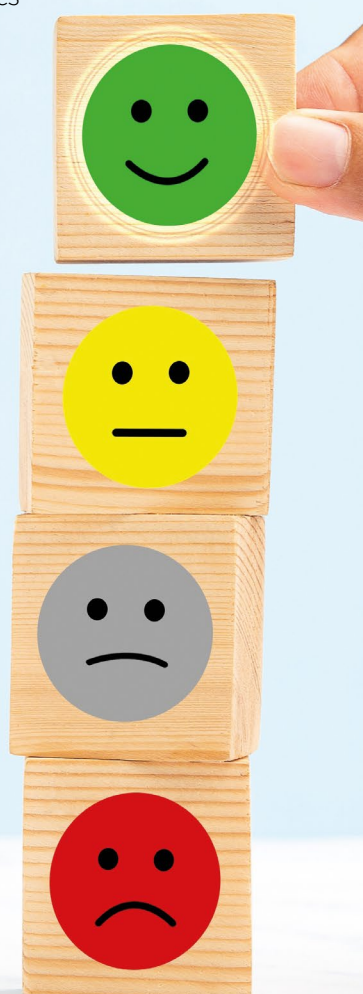
The Regulator for Social Housing has introduced a new set of measures to help tenants understand how their housing provider is performing. The measures have been created with tenants and are designed to make it easy to see how housing providers are performing in key service areas.

There are 22 measures in total. Some of these are provided directly to the Regulator by housing providers like Two Rivers Housing. These include things like, the percentage of homes with gas and fire safety checks, the number of complaints received in the year, and repairs completed within target timescales.

But more than half of the measures, are based on feedback directly from tenants and there are 12 questions all registered housing providers must ask. These will be reported to and published by the Regulator each year, so that tenants can compare the results with other providers.

We have done similar surveys with our tenants for many years now, but switched to the new questions this year. We use an independent research agency, who speak with around 1000 of our tenants every year to gather feedback. They provide a report, which we use to identify areas that are working well and the things we need to focus on to make improvements.

We share these results with you in Tenant Topics or on our website and from next April, we will also be sharing them with the Regulator. If you are contacted by our research agency during the year, please take a moment to share your thoughts and feedback with them.



## The new measures focus on five key areas:

1. Keeping properties in good repair.
2. Maintaining building safety.
3. Respectful and helpful tenant engagement.
4. Effective handling of complaints.
5. Responsible neighbourhood management.



# Fun in the sun with our community events!

## Star tip

Our next event will be a Halloween Spooktacular at Wheatpieces Community Centre on 30 October from 10:00am to 1:00pm. Keep an eye on our socials for booking information!



## You said, we did!

**YOU SAID:** You wanted our holiday clubs to be available in different communities.

**WE:** Took this on board and held three sessions over the summer covering Newent, Lydney, and Coleford. We are also looking at other community spaces across our patch where we can hold similar events in the future.

If you would like us to come to your community, get in touch with our community engagement team!



Our community engagement team have had a busy summer as they took our holiday club across the Forest of Dean.

Working with Artspace Cinderford, the team ran events in Lydney, Newent, and Coleford. As you can see from the photos, there was lots of fun to be had as people tried their hand at circus skills, played games and got their faces painted!

We were even joined by some of our local partners including Adult Education in Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean District Council Community Builders and Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service!

Keep an eye out on our website and social media pages for more family fun coming soon!

## Euroclydon sponsored knit at Parkside

Our Parkside tenants have been at it again! You will have seen their (woolly) mammoth knitted wonders in previous issues of Tenant Topics. From coronation bunting to remembrance poppies – there is nothing this group can't create out of wool.

This time raising £1,110 for Euroclydon Nursing Home and



Residential Home in Drybrook.

Many would think they'd prefer to stick to their knitting – but they are a talented and creative bunch and they've written a short poem to commemorate their efforts! Well done everyone!

## Our poem

In Parkside centre on 1st July,  
They met with knitting on their mind,  
Nine lady warriors,  
With needles to click and wool to wind.

To raise funds for a local home,  
Their goal a good amount of cash,  
Starting at 10 and finishing at eight,  
With good company the time went in a flash.

Thanks to all the sponsors,  
And friends who supported in so many ways,  
Just nine very busy ladies,  
One thousand, one hundred and ten pounds raised!

# Safety focus: Gas safety

At the beginning of September, the Gas Safe Register held its annual Gas Safety Week. This aims to highlight the danger of gas in your home and remind everyone of how they can stay gas safe.

Badly fitted and poorly serviced gas appliances can cause gas leaks, fires, and explosions, but they can also lead to Carbon Monoxide poisoning. Carbon Monoxide is a highly poisonous gas that can kill quickly and is difficult to identify as you cannot see, smell, or taste it in the air.

As your landlord, we do everything we can to make sure the gas supply to your home is

safe. We complete annual gas safety checks in the property, install carbon monoxide alarms, and service the appliances that we are responsible for too. But everyone has a role to play in gas safety.

## Star tip

Make sure you let our gas service engineer into the property, so they can complete the gas safety check.



# Remember, remember! Fire safety

With Bonfire night fast approaching, we are sharing some of Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service's fire safety tips.

The best and safest way to enjoy fireworks is at an organised display. These events are run by professionals and usually help raise funds for local charities or community groups making them a great way to support your local community.

However, if you do choose to have fireworks at home, here are some tips from the Fire Service to keep everyone safe.

## What to do if you think you have a gas leak

- Open doors and windows to allow fresh air in.
- Leave the property.
- If you can, turn the gas off at the mains supply.
- Phone the National Gas Emergencies number **0800 111 999**.
- Follow the advice given by the emergency operator.

Here are our top tips to help you stay gas safe in your home:

- If you buy a new gas appliance such as a cooker, you **must** use a Gas Safe registered engineer to install it.
- Test your carbon monoxide (and smoke) alarms regularly – if they aren't working let us know immediately so we can get them replaced.
- Keep vents and chimneys clear to allow proper ventilation.
- Make sure you let our engineers in to complete their annual service and inspection.

- Always buy fireworks from a reputable shop and be wary of sales on social media.
- Look for the UKCA & CE safety mark on the fireworks – if it's not present don't use them.
- Only allow adults to handle the fireworks.
- Keep fireworks in a closed box and only use one at a time.
- Read and follow the instructions on each firework carefully.
- Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back.
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes away from fireworks.
- Never return to a firework once it has been lit.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose near by for emergencies.
- Make sure any bonfires are put out properly before leaving them.
- Supervise children when they are using sparklers and dispose of them in a bucket of sand.

## Star tip

The best way to enjoy fireworks is at an organised display. Check with local schools and community groups to find one near you.





# How are we doing?

## 2022/2023



# A message from our CEO and Chair

The cost-of-living crisis has had a huge impact on the family finances across the country and we have been working hard to do what we can to support tenants during this difficult time.

To better understand the challenges facing our tenants, we set up a Cost-of-Living Group. This group worked with our local agency partners to provide additional support and guidance to our tenants and communities throughout the year.

As part of its work, we established a tenant hardship fund and obtained a grant from The Garnett Foundation to help those that were most in need. We were also able to provide a range of advice and guidance on ways to save energy, reduce waste and make the most of budgets through a number of events held in our communities as well as through our social media channels and other regular tenant communications.

As a result of the cost-of-living crisis, we saw an increase in demand for our support services. To help ensure that we could provide these services to those that needed them, we undertook a restructure of our housing and property teams.

This has helped us work more closely with tenants that need additional support, helped us get back out into our communities and identify the roles and resources we need to deliver against our organisation plan. We are confident that, as we continue to embed these changes, we will be in a strong position to continue to improve our services, adapt to regulatory changes and meet our commitment to provide warm, safe, affordable homes.

While 2022 finally saw the end of the global pandemic, the impact it left on our communities and our organisation was still being felt. We have worked hard to reinstate our community events and services such as estate inspections, but the biggest impact was on our repairs and maintenance programme.

We understand the frustration this has caused for those tenants waiting for a repair in their home and put a plan together to address this in the first half of the year. We are pleased to report that our Centigen team had cleared the backlog of repairs caused by the pandemic by August 2022 and would like to thank them and the wider team who pulled together to make this happen.

We were pleased to see a 2% increase in our repairs and maintenance satisfaction scores during 2022/2023. However, we recognise that we still have some work to do in strengthening our repairs service to improve flexibility and our overall performance in this area.

In March 2023, we appointed Ian Atkinson to the new position of Corporate Director of Property. Ian has a proven track record for delivering repairs and maintenance service improvements and will be working with the Centigen and property services teams alongside tenants to agree and make improvements to this service going forward.

While our overall tenant satisfaction scores remain good, we have seen a drop of 3% in overall satisfaction to 81% for the financial year.

We believe this has been driven by the disruption to our planned maintenance and repairs programmes. This has not only impacted the perceived 'quality of our homes' but how easy we are to deal with as our team struggled to effectively resource the large number of outstanding repairs in the first half of the year.

We have an aspiration to provide a great customer experience and will continue to use tenant feedback including satisfaction survey scores to identify areas for improvement to push our scores even higher.



To support this, we have been working with tenants to design a Customer Experience Strategy. This sets out our customer promise and how we will work together to ensure we remain focussed on providing a great service to all our customers. This will be embedded across the organisation in 2023/2024.

At the heart of our organisation is the promise to provide warm, safe, affordable homes to those that need them.

In 2018, we pledged to build 1,000 new homes by 2028. During the year we took handover of 99 new homes and started development work on another 125. We also reached the halfway point in our mission to deliver 1,000 new homes and have a healthy pipeline of development opportunities for the coming years.

Alongside this, we continued to invest in our existing homes. We spent £4.54 million to support the delivery of energy improvement work including new heating systems, new windows and doors and retrofit works. We also installed 152 new kitchens and 105 new bathrooms.

We remain committed to reducing our carbon footprint and ensuring that our homes are affordable to heat. Following the success of our decarbonisation retrofit demonstrator project, we secured funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 and Wave 2.1. The funding from Wave 1 was used to complete retrofit work at 18 of our homes in 2023. Funding from Wave 2.1 will be used to fund retrofit works at a further 36 homes between 2023 and 2025.

Despite another challenging year, we are pleased to report that the Group delivered a surplus of £2.9m, which can now be invested in our homes and services.

To consolidate these strong financial results, we are delighted to confirm that following an In Depth Analysis in June 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing confirmed our G1/V1 status for governance and financial viability.

These strong results are a testament to the continued hard work and dedication of our people. They are the foundation of our success and on behalf of the Group Board, we would like to thank them for everything they have and continue to do for our tenants and our organisation.

Like many similar organisations, recruiting and retaining colleagues has been challenging throughout the year. As a result, we reviewed and enhanced our colleague offering across the Group. This has enabled us to reduce colleague turnover and attract the best people where we have had vacancies.

Finally, Garry King announced that he would be stepping down as our Chief Executive in January 2024.

On behalf of the Group Board and the organisation we would like to thank him for everything he has done over the last 20 years. Under his leadership, our organisation has continued to grow, and he leaves us in a strong position to continue on our mission to ensure that everyone has a warm, safe, affordable home when they need it.



**Garry King**  
Chief Executive

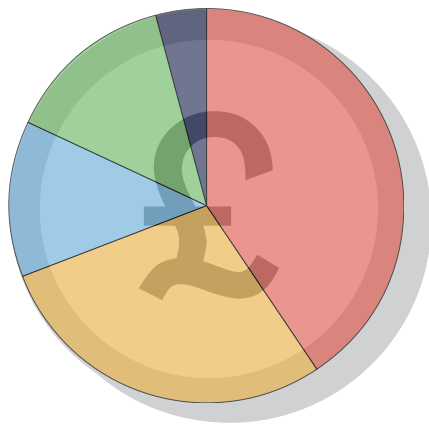
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. King'.



**Yvonne Leishman OBE**  
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Y. Leishman'.

# How your rent is spent



<div></div>	Developing homes and communities	41p
<div></div>	Maintaining homes	29p
<div></div>	Managing services	13p
<div></div>	Servicing of loans	14p
<div></div>	Additional services	4p

We believe everyone should have a warm, safe, affordable home and want to make sure every penny counts when it comes to how we invest the rent you pay to us.

This is why, for every pound in rent we collected during 2022/2023, 70p was spent on improving our homes or building new homes in our communities.

## Your feedback

Each year we ask you to provide feedback on our services. We work with an independent research agency to collect your thoughts on our services and use this to look at where we are doing well and where we need to make improvements.

# 81%

of tenants are satisfied with our overall service



## 83%

agree that their home is safe.



## 83%

find us easy to deal with



## 89%

find us friendly and approachable



## 78%

are satisfied with the quality of their home



## 78%

are satisfied with our repairs and maintenance service

\*Based on feedback from 800 tenants who responded to our annual survey between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

From April 2023, we will be adopting the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These will be published annually and reported to the Regulator of Social Housing.



# Compliments and complaints

You can provide feedback to us at any time in writing, in person, over the telephone or online via our website or social media channels. We use your feedback to make improvements to our services and always share feedback with our team.

During the year our team received:



172

compliments



227

complaints

40 of which  
went to stage 2.

## Working with the Housing Ombudsman

8 complaints were referred to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

Going forward, we will publish the details of Housing Ombudsman's findings on our website.

Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) findings in 2022/2023*	No.
Cases withdrawn after reaching a satisfactory resolution with the customer	5
Cases awaiting HOS decision as at 31 March 2023	3
HOS determinations received between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 (Details below)	1
1 x Maladministration (related to door replacement)	

\*Includes eight complaints referred during the year and any decisions made by HOS on previous complaints during 2022/2023 financial year.

## Learning from complaints

We welcome feedback from our tenants and customers and see complaints as an opportunity to improve our approach, processes, and services. As a result of complaints that we received in 2022/2023, we made the following changes:

- Reviewed our approach to how we handle complaints.
- Created a new complaints tracker to ensure that deadlines are met and agreed actions are completed.
- Improved how we communicate delays to the resolution of complaints.
- Improved our scripting process, so that our initial advice to tenants and customers is more effective.
- Made improvements to the systems to improve how we record and report information.
- Worked with our Out of Hours service providers to improve response times.
- Improved the process for tenants to claim compensation for the cost of running temporary heating, to make payment quicker and easier for tenants.

# Planned improvements

For every pound we received in rent during 2022/2023, 70p was put straight back into our homes. In total we spent more than £11.2m on repairing and maintaining our homes during the year.

In 2022/2023, we carried out:

47

Electrical rewires

123

Gas boiler replacements

Plus 10 night storage heaters and 1 air source heat pump.

We also installed...



137

window and door replacements



152

new kitchens



105

new bathrooms

## Repairs and safety checks

Our team carried out:

13,552 repairs

1,481 emergency call-outs

98.7% of daytime emergencies were resolved in less than 24 hours

68% of routine repairs were completed within the 20-day target range



3,260 gas services

592 solid fuel services

989 electrical tests

7,138 smoke detector tests

738 fire door inspections



It took an average of 22.42 days to complete a repair





## Supporting our tenants

Our team gave **FREE** debt, welfare and benefit advice to **644** tenants, helping them to claim:

**£155,528**  
in back-dated benefits

**£278,777**  
to help with debts

**£15,358**  
grant awards

**£887,276**  
in new benefits

**£306,675**  
in Universal Credit

**£70,421**  
in council tax reductions

*Did you know?*

We have a specialist welfare, debt and benefit team and can offer Two Rivers Housing tenants friendly advice and support. You are not alone.

Call: 0800 316 0897

Email: [WBDAteam@2rh.org.uk](mailto:WBDAteam@2rh.org.uk)

Our contact centre team are always on hand to help. They take all the calls that come into the organisation, wherever possible they will try to resolve your issue on the first call.

**In 2022/2023 they handled...**

 **48,922** calls

**86%** of which were  
answered within 20 seconds

# Warm, safe, affordable homes



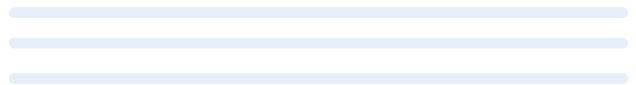
We invested **£16.9m**  
on building **99** new homes

and started work on another **125** new homes in our communities.

Since 2018, we have built **509** new homes for families in our communities.

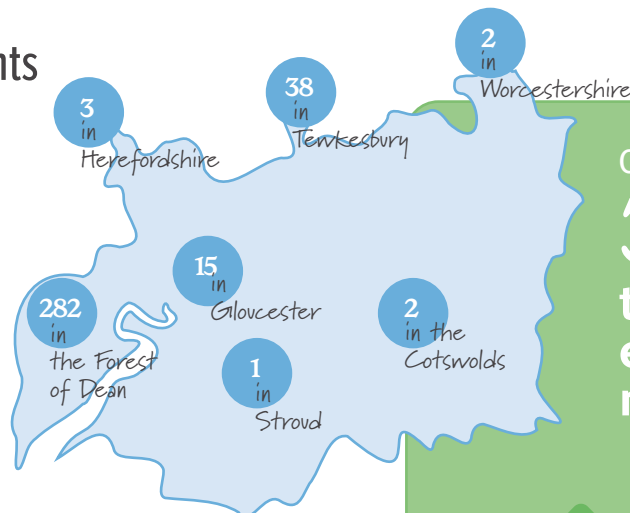
We believe that everyone should have a warm, safe, affordable home. Over the years, we've welcomed thousands of families to their new home and remain committed to making more affordable homes available in our communities.

In 2018, we pledged to build 1,000 new homes by 2028 and last year we hit the halfway point. As of 31 March 2023, had delivered 509 new homes.



In 2022/2023 we welcomed new tenants into

**343**  
of our homes



On average it took  
**33.6 days**  
to prepare an empty home for new tenants



Helping you become a home owner

**41**  
tenants exchanged homes



**11** of our homes

**39**

people chose Shared Ownership

**9**

people bought homes through Right to Buy or Right to Acquire

**5**

people bought their Shared Ownership home outright





## In our communities

At the end of the year, we restarted our estate inspections programme. Our neighbourhood team will be visiting all our estates each quarter and will be available for you to talk to and raise any issues.

Our team also works with tenants and other partners to deal with anti-social behaviour in our communities.

**158**  
reports of anti-social behaviour

including:

**25** about abusive or threatening behaviour

**7** related to drugs

**33** about noise

**6** about home and garden conditions

**11** about criminal activity

**5** about domestic abuse

**7** about intimidation



## Community events

Our team also ran and supported several events, partnering with local agencies such as FODCC Community Builders, Gloucester Fire and Rescue, Beezee Bodies, and Adult Education in Gloucestershire.



# Rent collection

As a not-for-profit organisation, our main source of income is the rent you pay.

We have a duty to make sure rent is collected, as without it we can't continue to invest in our homes.

We will always work with our tenants to help them manage their rent account but, when we have exhausted all other options, we will take action.

**5** tenants were evicted for rent arrears (owing an average of **£2,663** each)

We collected **£7,699** in recharges for items lost or broken.

**£73,312** was collected from former tenants who left owing money



**1,726** tenants claimed Universal Credit

**599** tenants were in arrears, averaging **£322.78**

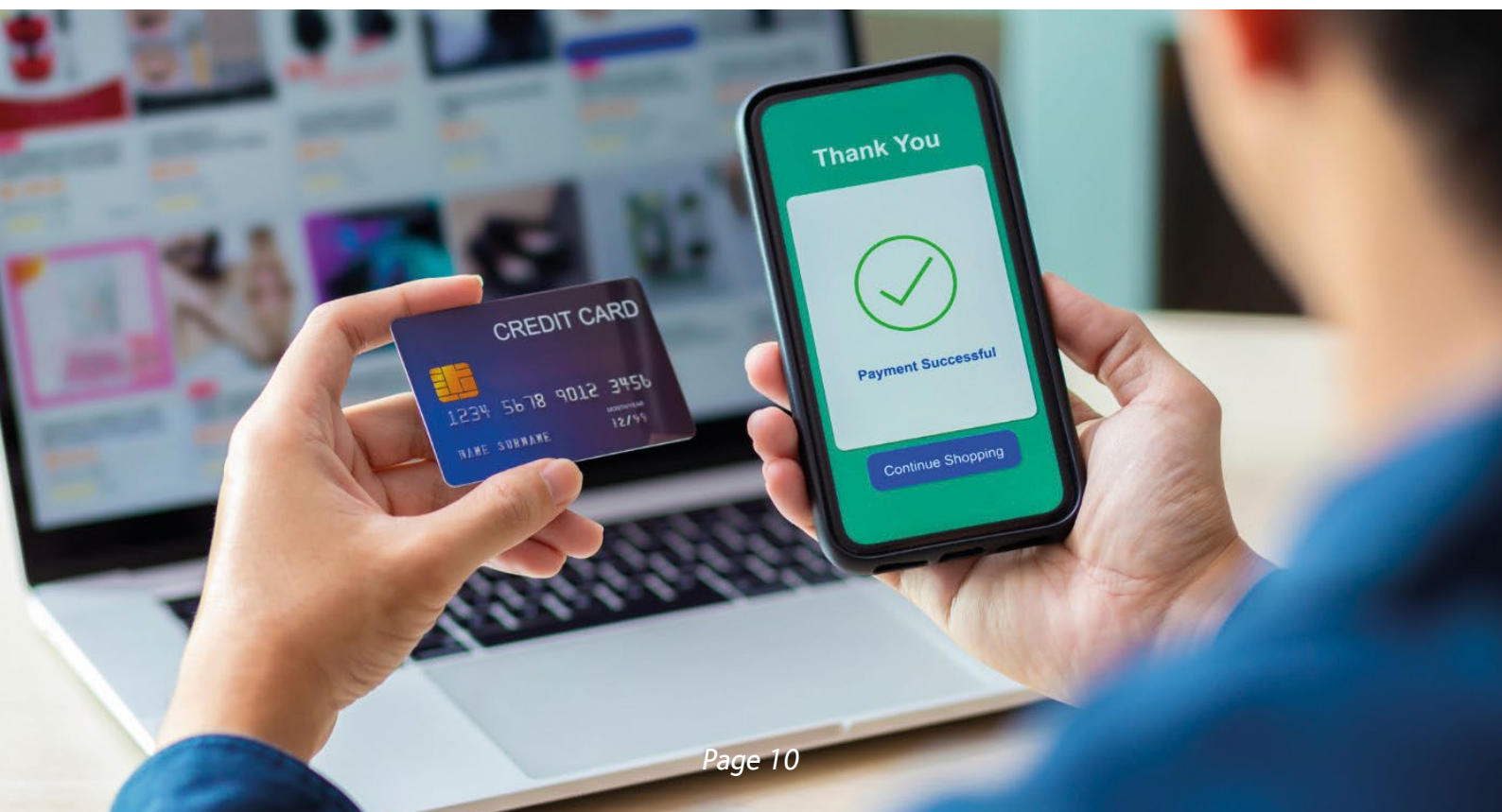
**3,784** tenants paid their rent on time (thank you!)

*But we were owed  
£193,345 in unpaid rent*

**2,195** paid by Direct Debit

Unfortunately, some tenants leave our properties still owing rent or having incurred charges for damaging the property.

When this happens, our team will do everything they can to recover the lost rents and charges.







## Managing our finances

We do everything we can to deliver Value for Money for the rent we collect. Below is an overview of our financial accounts for the year ending 31 March 2023.

You can find the full report in our Annual Report and Accounts, which is available on our website.

### Cash in

Rent	£22,218,000
Shared Ownership and property sales	£6,006,000
New loan	£0
Service charges	£909,000
Other income	£270,000
Interest received	£893,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£30,296,000</b>

### Cash out

Developing homes and communities	£16,003,000
Maintaining homes	£11,235,00
Managing services	£5,104,000
Interest paid	£5,347,000
Buying specialist services	£1,031,000
Other fixed assets	£3394,000
Net repayment of loan	£0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£39,132,000</b>



# Our subsidiaries



Centigen Facilities Management employed 55 permanent delivering grounds maintenance, cleaning, responsive repairs and void work. It completes repairs and maintenance for Two Rivers Housing.



TwoCan estate agency sold 48 homes in 2022/2023 including nine on the private market. It now sells property on behalf of four other housing associations.

## Did you know?

All the surplus generated by Centigen and TwoCan is gifted to Two Rivers Housing, to invest in creating great homes and supporting communities.

**Two Rivers Housing is a registered charity run on a not-for-profit basis. Any money left over after we have paid our bills goes straight back into providing homes and services. It is, therefore, important for us to achieve the most we can from the funds available, while making sure we deliver high quality services.**

Our regulator, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), requires us to complete a Value for Money position statement. This can be found in the library on our website.

We are bound by a set of RSH Regulatory Standards, including the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

Further details on the standards can be found on the RSH website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards>.



/TwoRiversHousing



/TRHousing



**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Gold

# Tackling anti-social behaviour in our communities



No one should feel like a victim in their own home. Which is why we are committed to tackling anti-social behaviour in our communities.

Anti-social behaviour can include hate crimes, loud music, and even dumping rubbish. It can be difficult to tackle and take time to gather evidence. If you feel that you are a victim of anti-social behaviour, we will work with you to gather the evidence and take action to resolve the issue.

You can report anti-social behaviour at any time by contacting us on **0800 316 0897** or emailing **asb@2rh.org.uk**. You can also write to us at Two Rivers Housing, Rivers Meet, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent, Gloucestershire, GL18 1DS.

## What happens when you report anti-social behaviour?

When you report anti-social behaviour, we start an investigation. We will work with you and our partner organisations to find a solution to the problem.

You will need to provide us with accurate information to help us build a case. This may include dates and times of incidents, who is involved, what the behaviour is and any action you have taken to try and resolve the issue.

This helps us fully understand the issue and find the best way to resolve it as quickly and fairly as possible. We may ask you to provide more information as we continue to investigate, and will keep you updated on the investigation and the actions we are taking.

If the situation changes while we are investigating, please let us know and always call 999 if you are in immediate danger or if there is an emergency.

You will find more information about how we handle anti-social behaviour on our website **www.tworivershousing.org.uk**

## Other ways to get help and support

Anti-social behaviour can affect entire communities and cause distress to individuals, making them feel frightened and frustrated. Nobody should be made to feel like this around the place they call home.

If you are looking for support after dealing with a situation related to anti-social behaviour in your community, you can find advice and guidance on these websites:

**www.victimsupport.org.uk**  
**www.asbhelp.co.uk**  
**www.ourwatch.org.uk**

## ASB focus: Noise nuisance

Noise nuisance is THE most common anti-social behaviour complaint. It can include anything from loud music to loud cars, arguing and shouting, animal noise or even excessive DIY.

Noise nuisance is not usually a one off event. However, if you consider the noise created by a neighbour to be unreasonable or it is affecting your life you should report it.

When dealing with a noise complaint it is important that you gather evidence. You should keep a diary of the noise that includes:

- The date and time of the noise
- A description of what the noise was.
- How long it lasted.
- How it made you feel.

This will help provide evidence to support the case.

## The Noise App

Did you know you can report a noise nuisance to us by recording straight from your phone?

You can download the Noise App for free. This will allow you to record the noise easily from your phone. It will also provide valuable evidence to our team and help us investigate the issue.

You can download the Noise App for your iPhone or Android phone.



Our neighbourhoodhousing team are doing regular estate walkabouts. This is a great opportunity for you to share information and experiences with our team.

Find the next walkabout in your local area: **www.tworivershousing.org.uk/news-library/events**

## Star tip

Visit the Noise App website to find out more:  
**www.thenoiseapp.com**



# Are you insured? Peace of mind this winter

We've all seen the devastating effects weather events such as gale force winds, rainwater flooding, and frost bursting pipes can have on people's homes.

So, is it time to consider if your home contents and personal belongings are protected if an incident were to happen in your home?

In partnership with Thistle Insurance Services, Two Rivers Housing offers a home contents insurance scheme. This can provide cover for damage to your

contents caused by storms or floods, falling trees and branches, as well as fire, theft, and much more.

We hope that you will never suffer a flood or water damage, but these things do happen. Please remember you are responsible for replacing your home contents and belongings. Contents insurance is designed to help protect your possessions and personal belongings.

Which is why we suggest all tenants and leaseholders take out home contents either through our special scheme or by making their own arrangements. It is a good idea to consider what a home contents insurance policy would cover you for in order to help you make an informed decision on whether you need one.

To find out more about the Home Contents Insurance Scheme, where you can pay premiums alongside your rent. Contact us on:

- Tel: **0800 316 0897**
- Visit: **[www.tworivershousing.org.uk/your-home/money-matters/contents-insurance](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk/your-home/money-matters/contents-insurance)**
- Or request an application pack from your local housing office.

Two Rivers Housing in partnership with Thistle Insurance Services Limited. Thistle Tenant Risks is a trading style of Thistle Insurance Services Limited. Thistle Insurance Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority Firm Reference Number 310419. Registered in England under No. 00338645. Registered office: Rossington's Business Park, West Carr Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 7SW. Thistle Insurance Services Ltd is part of the PIB Group.

Thistles Privacy Policy: **[www.thistleinsurance.co.uk/Privacy-Policy](http://www.thistleinsurance.co.uk/Privacy-Policy)**

## Tips to keep your home safe this winter:

- If you are away from your home, close and lock all doors and windows, ask a neighbour to keep an eye out.
- Don't leave candles or flames unattended.
- Regularly clear debris from drains and ditches.
- Let us know if any outdoor pipes or water tanks need their insulation replacing.
- Consider home contents insurance.



## New standards: Share your feedback with the Regulator

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) is currently asking tenants of social housing providers to share their feedback on a new set of Standards.

Standards are documents that set out the Regulator's expectations for housing providers. They outline the things that all social housing providers must do and are used to hold them to account.

The RSH is looking to bring in four new standards to protect tenants – these will be called the Consumer Standards.

They cover:

- Safety and quality
- Transparency, influence, and accountability
- Neighbourhood and community
- Tenancy

You can find out more about the proposed consumer standards and share your feedback directly with the Regulator here:

**[www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards)**

Or search Consumer Standards consultation on your favourite search engine!



# Welcome home!



## Warmer homes thanks to government grant

We are doing everything we can to make our homes warmer in the winter months.

This includes ways to make our maintenance budgets stretch as far as they can. Which is why our asset investment team made a bid for the government's ECO4 scheme.

ECO4 is a government-funded scheme that provides grants to support low-income households. The scheme will run until 2026 and provides funding to install new boilers, insulation, heat pumps, and central heating systems. It is funded by tax collected from the Big Six energy suppliers in the UK.

In August, we started a pilot project in 19 of our homes. We have been working with Evolve Home Energy Solutions (Evolve) to make improvements to the properties. This has included, solar PV, loft insulation, air source heat pumps,

and some small improvements to the building.

Without the partnership, this work would cost up to £18,000 per home. By working with Evolve and making use of the government grant, we have reduced this to £3,500. This means we will be able to do similar work in more of our homes with the budget we have available – delivering great value for money.

We will be targeting homes that have the lowest energy performance first. This will help make sure these homes are as warm and affordable to run as possible. We will contact tenants directly if their home is eligible for the work.



## Working with NHS Gloucestershire to deliver accessible homes

NHS Gloucestershire have provided a £90,000 grant to help deliver two of our new build properties at Marian's Walk. The grant will enable us to design and build the homes to be fully wheelchair accessible and adaptable for tenants with physical disabilities.

Alongside this, the grant will also help us ensure that the rest of the properties (with the exception of first floor flats) are built to an accessible and adaptable standard. This will make them easier to adapt in the future as the needs of tenants change.

## Marian's Walk to get funding from Homes England

As part of their ongoing drive to deliver the best value for money for our tenants, the development team look for grants to help finance our new build programme. In July 2023, they secured grant funding for our Marian's Walk site in Berry Hill from Homes England.

Homes England is the government's housing and regeneration agency. It provides financial support to housing associations and registered providers to

increase the number of affordable homes across the country.

Marian's Walk is a plot that we own in full, and we will be working with local developers, suppliers, and contractors to build 17 new affordable homes on the site. This means that, as far as possible, the money we spend on developing the site will be supporting local businesses and employment – keeping the funds in the local economy.



# Building and improving homes

## Work nears completion at our latest retrofit project

In September 2022, we completed our first ever full retrofit project at a small number of our homes in Blakeney. The pilot project was partly funded by the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). It gave us the opportunity to get a better understanding of the work that will be needed to improve the energy efficiency of all our homes.

Using what we learned from the pilot project, we submitted a successful bid for more funding from the SHDF. We have used this money to support a second retrofit project in some of our homes in Huntley and Newent. These properties were selected based on their energy performance, which was rated as D or E.



The retrofit work was started in November 2022. We have installed new windows and doors, air source heat pumps, solar PV, and external wall insulation. We have also completed other improvements to make the properties as energy efficient as possible.

Based on the results from the pilot project, we expect to see a 50% reduction in the amount of energy needed to heat these homes – which is great news for tenants and the environment.

While these projects only impact a small number of homes, we are using what we learn to look for other ways to improve even more of our properties. We now understand what measures have the biggest impact on energy efficiency and have used this knowledge to look for alternative funding such as ECO4 (find out more on page 9).

We have also successfully bid for more funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund's Wave 2.1 grant. This will be used to help support retrofit works in more than 30 homes in Cinderford over the next two years.



## New kitchen and bathroom supplier

Replacing kitchens and bathrooms in our homes is a key part of our planned maintenance programme. When well looked after, we expect a kitchen to need replacing every 20 years, and a bathroom every 30 years – but with almost 4,500 homes there is always work to do!

We constantly review the performance and quality of the contractors we use and, at the end of last year we decided to change our kitchen and bathroom contractor. In July, we appointed Bristol-based MD Group and have been working with them to restart our kitchen and bathroom replacement programme.

MD Group specialise in providing repairs and maintenance services to social housing providers. Managed by our property services team, they started work in our homes in August and will be working with us over the next year to deliver new kitchens and bathrooms in our homes.

You can find out more about MD Group on their website: [www.mdgroup.co.uk](http://www.mdgroup.co.uk)

## Local councils provide funding for more affordable housing

Forest of Dean District Council (FODDC) and Tewkesbury Borough Council have awarded over half a million in grants to help us build more affordable homes in our communities.

FODDC have awarded £207,772 to help us build new homes in Coleford and Lydney, while Tewkesbury Borough Council have granted £295,000 to help with the purchase of a five bedroom home in Ashchurch. Ashchurch is an area in desperate need of larger homes for families to rent and this property will be available for bids on the Homesearch website when it's available.

[www.tworivershousing.org.uk](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk)



# How does your garden grow?

The sun may have been in hiding this summer but tenants at Western Way haven't let that dampen their spirits!

Working with Adult Education in Gloucestershire, they formed a gardening club to have a go at growing their own vegetables.

Together they have grown a variety of plants, flowers, and vegetables from seed in the shared garden at the site.



They kept weekly learning logs that documented what they planted and what was growing and even gave the benches a new lease of life to make the whole area brighter for everyone to enjoy.



Their efforts were so successful that they had to hold a plant sale in July to sell on the plants they didn't have room for.

*for you -for your community - not for profit*

# Holding out for a late summer!

Ok, so the weather hasn't been the best so far, but we are hoping for some late sunshine and asked our team for their best BBQ recipes! We hope these might encourage the sun to appear and if you give them a go – snap a picture and share them with us on our Facebook page!



## Jess's Homemade Kebabs

Contracts Manager Jess kicks us off with the king of Kebabs!

1. Take some diced chicken and spice it up with your favourite flavours.
2. Add some natural yoghurt and leave to marinate overnight.
3. Carefully skewer the chicken pieces and cook on the BBQ until the chicken is cooked through.
4. Serve with fries, salad, or warm pita breads.

## John's Steak and Cider

Centigen Operative John, shared this super tasty sizzling steak recipe!

1. Cut the steak into thin strips and marinate in garlic and herbs.
2. Place in a baking tray and drench in cider – leave overnight.
3. Cook on the BBQ in a foil tray until cooked to your liking.
4. Serve in a warm baguette with onions.



## Mark's Superb Salmon

Senior IT Officer Mark offered up his simple but superb salmon recipe

1. Take your salmon and sprinkle with parsley or chilli powder (if you like a bit of a kick).
2. Wrap the salmon in foil – leaving space for the steam and place on the BBQ until cooked.
3. Serve with your choice of sides.







C N A R B I S R A E S E P P  
 E C H P A O U W L K E L M C  
 K A N B P K I T E C L A K A  
 A U T U M N A L P A P T A N  
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 T T E Y U A A W E S S E O A  
 E T P T C M O R P P A V R C  
 R P I R U O P R T A E R N K  
 E S S R T T K K E M D A E E  
 D I K K L H U F I D P H K T  
 I R L E A F S S L N I P O N  
 S C T N A R R U E T W C A E  
 C S M W O R C E R A C S R W

Which of these  
Autumn words is  
missing from the  
wordsearch?

Apples Leaf  
 Autumnal Pumpkin  
 Cider Rake  
 Crisp Scarecrow  
 Harvest Sweater  
 Jacket Windy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number/email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred voucher: ☐ Amazon ☐ Tesco ☐ M&S ☐ B&Q ☐ Argos

## Autumn tea break

You can enter by emailing your name, full postal address, preferred voucher, and the hidden word to us at **communications@2rh.org.uk** or by completing the form and returning it in the post to:

Communications team, Two Rivers Housing, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent, Gloucestershire GL18 1DS

The first correct answer selected at random after **31 October 2023** will win a £15 gift voucher.

The missing word in our summer wordsearch was **HUMID**.

Good luck!

## Win a £15 voucher!

Grab a pen and a cuppa, sit back and complete our autumn teaser!

Simply find the words in the wordsearch and let us know which one is missing and you could win a £15 voucher.



### Contact us:

Please tell us if you would like this in large print or on audio CD.  
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