

# Tenant Topics

Newsletter for Two Rivers  
Housing Tenants

**Annual  
Review**  
inside this  
issue

## Gareth is proving fitness really is for everyone!

Meet Gareth Hughes a Two Rivers Housing tenant who has opened an inclusive gym in Bream and is helping local people of all abilities reach their fitness goals.

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your chance  
to win a  
£15 voucher!



**tworivers**  
HOUSING



# Meet Gareth who opened an inclusive gym in Bream last summer

Last July in Bream, Gareth Hughes opened a gym with a difference. Inclusive Fitness is designed to be a fully inclusive and adaptable gym. Open to everyone it aims to create a warm and friendly safe place for people to build a fitness routine.

Gareth has always been interested in fitness, but it was after his motorcycle accident in 2016 that he started to think about opening a gym of his own. The accident meant Gareth became a wheelchair user and he quickly realised that most gyms are not designed for disabled people. So, he set about creating a gym that could be used by anyone.

While joining a new gym can be intimidating, Gareth and his team at Inclusive Fitness have created a supportive space for people to reach their goals. The team have experience with disability and can help members adapt their routines to suit their needs. The equipment in the gym can also be easily adjusted so that people can use it while in a wheelchair and

they run fitness classes so people can exercise as part of a group.

Gareth had a clear vision for the look and feel of the gym from the start.

His favourite colour is pink so he knew pink features would be a big part of the gym. He also knew it would have black walls and graffiti artwork and his nickname 'Big Gars' is also

painted on one of the walls. He took his inspiration for the design from relaxed nights out at bars with friends because that was the kind of friendly atmosphere he wanted to create in the new gym.

Giving people an opportunity to socialise and make friends was another big reason Gareth wanted to open the gym.

Social isolation can be a huge problem for people with disabilities and Gareth experienced this after his accident. Creating the gym has helped him make connections in the area and he hopes he can now do this for others.

It took Gareth six years to take his idea for the gym and make it a reality. He has partnered with Barnwood

*Adaptable equipment allows you to move the seat to accommodate a wheelchair*



*Gareth's nickname is graffiti at the back of the cardio room*



*Wheelchair friendly equipment*

Trust, Sports England and UnLtd to fund the business, which is a Community Interest Company (CIC). This means that it is a not-for-profit and membership fees go straight back into the gym itself.

Gareth's supportive, welcoming approach has already made it a popular place with the locals, but his plans aren't finished yet! He wants to reach more disabled people who would find the adaptable facilities useful. He is currently looking at options for shuttle buses that could

help transport groups of people from other towns and wants to take on another building to increase the classes he can offer.

He hopes that he can support people to improve their mental and physical health through exercise. What an amazing way to support the local community and proof that fitness really can be for everyone!



*Gym members chatting*



## Star tip

If you are interested in joining Inclusive Fitness you can sign up and book a session at [inclusivefitnesscic.clubright.co.uk/memberarea/selectmembership](https://inclusivefitnesscic.clubright.co.uk/memberarea/selectmembership) or search for Inclusive Fitness CIC on Facebook or Instagram.





# Gorgeous gardens! Winners of our 2024 garden competition

There are some truly beautiful gardens in our communities! So, to celebrate that we ran our tenant garden competition across the summer. Thanks to everyone who sent in photos of their beautiful blooms, perfect pots, and gorgeous gardens – we had some fantastic entries!

It certainly made it difficult for our judges to pick their winners, but after careful consideration, we are happy to announce the winners are:



Graham Jones took the prize for **Best Garden** for his beautifully designed space

We love the pots of colour in Stephen Childs' garden. He won the **Best tubs, pots, and baskets** category.



Proving that a small garden can bright and fun, Abbie Lloyd has won the **Best use of initiative and creativity of a small space** category.

**Best communal garden** was awarded to Keith Fletcher. He has found some creative ways to bring joy to a shared space.





# A 'toast' to Travis Perkins!

Without a doubt, a hearty breakfast is the best way to start the day. Throw in some fun activities and community spirit and you've got the

ingredients for one of our half-term and summer holiday breakfast clubs too!

In October half term, our community engagement team

were kept on their toes as they ran and supported breakfast clubs for families in Sedbury, Cinderford, Lydney, and Bream.

It's not easy making toast and tea for 30 or 40 hungry people and a normal toaster just wasn't cutting it. So, we had a word with our materials

supplier Travis Perkins.

As part of our materials contract, Travis

Perkins put a percentage of everything we spend into a special community fund that we can access to support projects in our communities. Through this fund (and with a grant of £200 from the Forest of Dean District Council) we have been able to purchase three special catering toasters that we can use at our breakfast clubs and other events.

So, in this edition of Tenant Topics we're raising a (piece of) toast to our partners at Travis Perkins to say thanks for their help in making our breakfast clubs run a little more smoothly!



## The Barry Phillips Suite: A tribute to a community champion

*Hayley with Scheme Co-ordinator Sharon and Tenants opening the Barry Phillips Suite*



Tenants at our HomePlus scheme in Ryelands Road, recently came together to honour one of their own – a true community hero, Barry Phillips. Their heartfelt tribute? Naming their brand-new games room

The Barry Phillips Suite in recognition of the extraordinary impact Barry had on their lives.



*Andrea Wylde playing table tennis*

Barry's journey was nothing short of inspiring. Having represented Zimbabwe at the Olympics, his love for health and fitness wasn't just a personal passion – it was his gift to the community. Whether it was leading weekly weigh-ins, organising exercises, or simply cheering everyone on, Barry's boundless energy and encouragement touched everyone.

*Gordan Creed gives it a go!*



"He was our sports ambassador," shared Rita Jones, one of Barry's neighbours. "Always motivating us, keeping us active, and reminding us to look after ourselves."

Barry's dedication went far beyond words. He secured equipment like an exercise bike, rowing machine, and other indoor sports gear for everyone to

use. So, when the idea to transform an unused guest room into a games room came up, the community saw it as the perfect way to carry Barry's mission forward.

With help from tenants and the Two Rivers Housing team – including Chief Exec Hayley – the project took shape. Walls were cleaned, painted, and

refreshed, and a brand-new carpet

was laid. The room now boasts a full-size table tennis table, and it's brimming with potential for laughter, camaraderie, and fitness.

Sadly, Barry passed away before he could see the completed room. But his friends ensured his spirit remained at the heart of their efforts. Naming it The Barry Phillips Suite was their way of saying thank you for his kindness, support, and dedication to keeping them all active and healthy.



*Hayley playing Table Tennis*



*Former NED Rita playing table tennis*

# Changes to our team

Over the summer, we've welcomed two new executive directors to our team. Jonny Jones and Liz Evans have joined Hayley and Carol on the executive team. Here's a little bit about them and what they'll be doing:



**Jonny Jones**  
*Executive  
Director of Homes*

Jonny joined us in July 2024, when he was appointed Executive Director of Homes. He started working in housing in 2010 and has held senior positions at Taff Housing Association and Cardiff Community Housing.

Jonny and his team are responsible for looking after our homes, making sure that they are warm, safe, affordable and well maintained. Throughout his career, he has been a champion for tenants, working with colleagues across Wales to improve quality standards across the sector and with tenants to drive improvements in repairs and maintenance services.

He's a bit of a local superstar having played football for Cardiff City Academy when he was younger and making frequent TV appearances on national television shows including the BBC's Pointless and the National Lottery Secret Fortune, as well as Channel 4's £100k Drop. But ultimately, he's a family man who loves spending time with his wife and daughters or working out at the gym.



**Liz Evans**  
*Executive  
Director  
of People and  
Neighbourhoods*

Liz joined our executive team in September 2024 as our Executive Director of People and Neighbourhoods. She has more than 25 years' experience in social housing and has held senior leadership positions for over 12 years at Cardiff Community Housing and Bron Afon Community Housing.

Liz and her team are responsible for looking after our tenants and the team here at Two Rivers Housing. It's a role that supports everything from our welfare, benefit and debt advice team and neighbourhood housing advisors right through to our people and communications teams.

Throughout her career, Liz has been a champion for tenants' voice and is focussed on improving services to provide the best customer experience. Always ensuring that tenants remain at the heart of services, she specialises in driving transformational change to create cultures of strong customer-focussed teams that are motivated to be the best of the best!



**Chris Watkins**  
*Our new  
Assistant Director  
of Assets*

Alongside our new executive directors, we have appointed our very own Chris Watkins as our new Assistant Director of Assets. Chris joined us as a carpenter in 2007 and has worked his way up through our organisation ever since.

He's a local lad that grew up in the Forest of Dean and learned his trade with a local building company before joining us. During his time here he has developed his knowledge and skills taking on several roles within the company and eventually working his way up to the position of Head of Assets and Building Safety.

Chris interviewed for the role of Assistant Director in September. During his interview he outlined his plans to support the team and help them work more closely with tenants to make improvements to the services they provide.

He also showed a real commitment to helping the team deliver a great customer experience and ensuring that the team have the chance to grow and develop their own skills and knowledge.

He will be working with Jonny and the team to make sure that our homes are safe. He is responsible for making sure we complete our landlord safety checks and that we continue to invest in improving our homes. He is also responsible for making our homes warmer working with the team to find ways to improve their energy efficiency and reduce our carbon footprint.







# Health & Safety in our homes

## Preventing damp and mould in your home

### Tips to prevent damp and mould

- 1. Ventilation:** Good airflow is essential. Open windows regularly to let moisture escape, especially after cooking, showering, or drying clothes indoors. Use extractor fans if available.
- 2. Heating:** Maintain a steady, low level of heat throughout your home, especially during colder

We want to make sure that your home is warm, safe, and free from damp and mould. Damp and mould can affect both your property and your health, especially if left unchecked, so it's important that it is treated and removed quickly.

In most cases, damp and mould is caused by condensation, which is created when cold surfaces meet warm air. If you spot damp and mould in your home, please let us know so that we can investigate the cause and help make sure it is removed effectively. You can also help reduce the risk of damp and mould by following the tips below.

months. This helps to keep walls warm, reducing the chance of condensation.

- 3. Avoid drying clothes indoors:** When possible, dry clothes outside. If that's not an option, use a ventilated room with a window open, or place clothes near a fan to help moisture disperse.
- 4. Wipe away condensation:** Condensation can lead to damp spots. Wipe down windows and cold surfaces regularly to prevent moisture from building up.

### 5. Keep furniture away from walls:

Allow a small gap between walls and furniture to improve airflow and reduce damp patches on walls.

### What to do if you spot damp or mould

If you notice damp or mould in your home, it's important to act quickly. Small areas of mould can be cleaned with a damp cloth and a mild detergent. Avoid harsh scrubbing as it may spread spores.

If the mould comes back or there are large patches of damp and mould in your home, we will need to investigate what's causing the issue, so that we can identify the root cause it can be treated effectively.

### Contact Two Rivers Housing for help

If you have damp or mould in your home, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can call us, email us or report the issue on our website, and our team will arrange a visit to assess and address the issue. Taking action early helps us protect your home and health, so please let us know as soon as you can if you spot damp or mould in your home.

### Damp and mould. Spot it. Sort it

To report damp and mould:

Call: **0800 316 0897**

Email: **customerservices@2rh.org.uk**  
(Put damp and mould in the subject)

Website: **www.tworivershousing.org.uk/your-home/report/reporting-damp-and-mould**

## Stay Safe: Warning about dangerous stickers

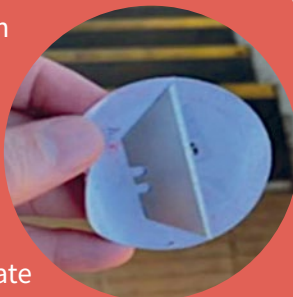
We want to share an important safety message with all our tenants to help keep you and your community safe.

One of our contractors has made us aware of a potential injury risk from stickers designed to cause harm. These stickers have been found in communal areas within blocks of flats across the country and may have hidden blades underneath. They are deliberately created to injure anyone who tries to remove them.

While we haven't had reports of this happening in any of our homes, we want to make sure you are aware of the risk and know how to stay safe.

### What to do if you see a suspicious sticker:

- Do not try to remove it yourself. Attempting to peel it off could result in serious injury.
- Report it to us immediately so we can investigate and safely remove it. Call us on **0800 316 0897**.



Your safety is our priority, so please keep an eye out around any communal spaces. By working together, we can ensure everyone stays safe.

If you'd like to see an example of how blades can be hidden under stickers, we've included a picture above.



# How are we doing?

## 2023-2024 Annual Review



# A message from Hayley



When I took over as Chief Executive of Two Rivers Housing in February, I promised to tackle the things that matter to you and work with you to make improvements to our services.

It is really important for us to understand how you feel about your home and the services we provide. Your feedback is helping us plan for the future and make improvements.

At the beginning of the year, we established our 'Tenants' Voice Committee. This group is led by tenants who meet every two months to review our services and help us make improvements. They are joined by me and members of our Group Board including the Chair. This means that our Board can hear how it really feels to be a Two Rivers Housing tenant directly from those living in our homes.

We are also listening to what you have to say through independently run surveys, the results of which are called Tenant Satisfaction Measures. This is a new survey that all housing associations must complete with their tenants. Developed by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) with tenants and landlords, these measures not only show how we are doing, but they can also help you understand how we are performing when comparing us with others.

The independent research company, Acuity, who carry out the research, contacted 1,200 tenants from the 4,500 households we serve and asked how they felt we were performing in key areas.

Almost eight out of ten (79%) tenants that were asked said that they were satisfied with the overall service we provide. We also saw improvements in key areas including the maintenance of our homes (78% very or fairly satisfied), the safety of our homes (84% very or fairly satisfied), and complaints handling, which improved by 8% to 41% very or fairly satisfied. (33% last year).

But the surveys also told us that there are some areas where we need to do better including how we handle your concerns on anti-social behaviour, how well we deal with your complaints, and how we look after communal areas and shared spaces in our neighbourhoods.

We also looked at complaints that came from you and we know that our repairs service and tackling anti-social behaviour were key issues that you raised during the year, alongside the quality and frequency of our grounds maintenance service in some of our neighbourhoods.

We have used this feedback to help shape our new corporate plan. This is the plan that sets out what we want to achieve in the next three years, which we will launch later this year.

**We'd love to hear from you!**

If you'd like to get in touch with us and share your thoughts and opinions on our services we'd love to hear from you. You can do this in lots of ways including:

**In writing:** Two Rivers Housing,  
Rivers Meet, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent,  
Gloucestershire GL18 1DS

**By email:** [customerservices@2rh.org.uk](mailto:customerservices@2rh.org.uk)

**By calling:** 0800 316 0897

**On our website:** [www.tworivershousing.org.uk](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk)

**On our official social media channels:**

[www.facebook.com/TwoRiversHousing](http://www.facebook.com/TwoRiversHousing)

[www.x.com/TRHousing](http://www.x.com/TRHousing)

[www.linkedin.com/company/TwoRiversHousing](http://www.linkedin.com/company/TwoRiversHousing)



# A message from Hayley

I know that the past year has been a challenging one for you and your family with high energy costs and other day to day costs rising. We will continue to keep our homes affordable and invest in additional services such as Welfare and Debt Advisors to ensure you get the support if you need it.

The team at Two Rivers Housing has also seen significant change with Garry King, the longstanding Chief Executive retiring in January 2024. I would like to thank Garry for his commitment and passion for the organisation and to delivering warm, safe affordable homes across the Forest of Dean and the wider Gloucestershire area.

Alongside this, we have a newly formed executive team who will be working together to make Two Rivers Housing an organisation you can be proud of.

Jonny Jones has taken on the role of Executive Director of Homes and Liz Evans joined us our new Executive Director of People and Neighbourhoods. They will work with Deputy Chief Executive Carol Dover and me to deliver the new corporate plan and make improvements in the areas that you have told us we need to do better.

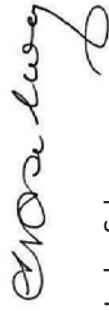
We will also have a new Chair of our Board from October. Ted Pearce will take over from Yvonne Leishman, who has reached the end of her tenure as Chair of the Board. Yvonne has been an excellent Chair, and I'm pleased that she will be staying on as a Non Executive Board Member once she steps down as Chair.

September saw the publication of the final report of the inquiry into the tragedy that was Grenfell.

It is a stark reminder of the responsibility we have as senior leaders to never forget, to always listen to you and always put your welfare at the centre of everything we do. I will never take the role of Chief Executive of Two Rivers Housing for granted and recognise the privilege in leading this organisation on your behalf.

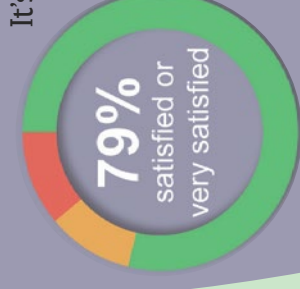
My priority for the year ahead is to put you at the heart of this organisation. I promise to listen to what you are telling us, continue to make improvements to our services and understand our role in investing in the wider communities that we serve.

#Together we can make a real difference.



Hayley Selway  
**Chief Executive**

## How are we doing? Your feedback



It's really important that we understand how you feel about your home and the services we provide. Our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) help to provide a snapshot of this. These measures include a set of 12 questions that were designed with tenants by the Regulator of Social Housing.

We use an independent research agency to complete the survey on our behalf. They contact around 1,200 tenants each year and ask for their feedback on our homes and services.

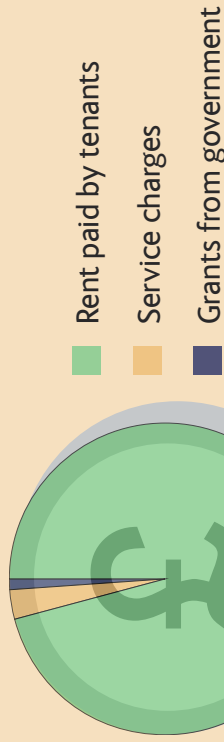
Of the 1,200 tenants that they contacted, 79% said that overall, they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service they receive from us. Just over one in ten (11%) said that they were not satisfied including 6% who said they were very dissatisfied with the service we provide.

We have included some of our TSM results in this document but, you can view our full set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures on our website: [www.tworivershousing.org.uk](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk).

# How your rent is spent

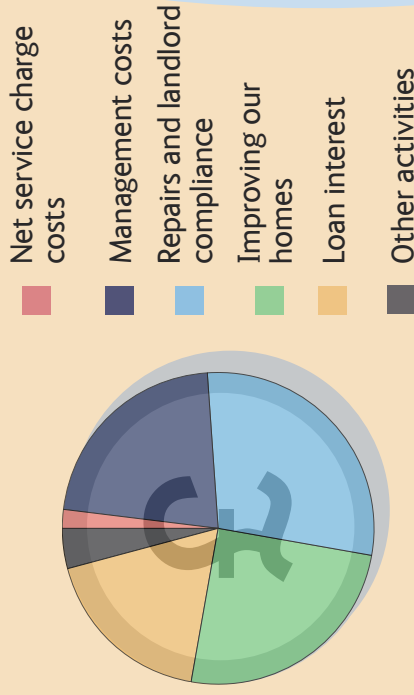
As a registered charity and social housing provider, the majority of our income comes from the rent you pay.

## Income from social housing



We use the rent you pay us to maintain, repair and invest in our homes and the services that we provide to you.

## How this was spent



# Repairing your home

## How are we doing? Your feedback

In our 2023/2024 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM), we asked 1,200 tenants how satisfied or dissatisfied they were that their home is well maintained.

**78%** of tenants asked said their home is well maintained.



We also asked those that have had a repair in their home how satisfied they were with our repairs service and the time taken to complete the repair.

- **80%** of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with their repair.
- **78%** of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with the time taken to complete their repair.

## Repairs performance

You've told us we need to make improvements to our repairs service, in particular when it comes to quality of the work and keeping you updated about what's going on. We'll be focussing on this during 2024/2025 and hope to see improvements in this area during the year. Here's a round-up of our repairs performance for 2023/2024.

**12,619**

responsive repairs were completed in our homes.

**2,513**

emergency repairs were completed in our homes

**72%**

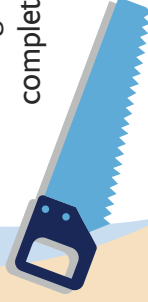
of repairs were completed within target timescales

**97.2%**

of emergency repairs were completed within 24 hours



**On average it took us 23.8 days to complete a responsive repair.**





## Making your home warmer

Over the last few years, we've been investing in our homes to make them warmer and more affordable to heat.

We know we still have work to do in this area and have partnered with other local housing providers and specialist contractors to help us complete energy improvement works in even more of our homes.

During the last financial year:

**100** of our homes were made warmer through the government's ECO4 programme. We installed air source heat pumps, solar PV and loft insulation in these homes.

**28** of our homes were retrofitted to make them warmer. This was partly funded by the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

### Energy performance ratings

The government has set a target for all social housing homes to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or above by 2030. At the end of the financial year:

**56.6%** of our homes had an EPC rating of C or above.

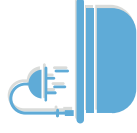
## Investing in your home

Each year, we invest in home improvements including new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors, as well as electrical rewires, roof replacements, and other maintenance work. In 2023/2024 we installed



**47**

new kitchens



**7**

new bathrooms



**79**

new windows in  
homes



**38**

new external  
doors in  
homes

We also completed:

- **91** roof renewals
- **71** external and internal decoration works.
- **39** electrical rewires as well as external property work including repointing, rendering and boundary walls.

### Tackling damp and mould

Tackling damp and mould continues to be a priority for our repairs team. Last year, we made some significant changes to how we identify and manage damp and mould in our homes.

We now have a dedicated damp and mould team. They work with tenants and our wider team to identify the root cause of the issue and ensure that the work is completed as quickly as possible.



Alongside this, we have implemented a new call back process. Tenants who have previously reported damp and mould in their homes will be called once the work has been completed after three, six and 12 months. This will help ensure that the damp and mould issue has been fully resolved.

If caught early, damp and mould is relatively easy to deal with so, it is important that you report any damp and mould in your home to our team. You can report it to our team in person, by telephone, by email or on our website.

# Working #Together

We value your feedback and want to work with you to make improvements to our services. We know that we don't always get things right, but we are committed to learning from the things we get wrong and making things better for everyone.

There are lots of ways you can get in touch and share your thoughts, which you will find on page eight of this document.

## How are we doing? Your feedback

In our 2023/2024 Tenant Satisfaction Measures, we asked 1,200 tenants how they feel about working with us. This is what they told us.

**84%** of tenants asked agreed that we treat them fairly and with respect.



**79%** of tenants asked were satisfied that we kept them informed about the things that matter to them.



**70%** of tenants asked agreed that we listen to their views and act on them.

# Supporting you

Over the years, our welfare, benefits and debt advice team have helped thousands of tenants manage their finances more effectively. This is a free service which is available to all of our tenants.

**In 2023/2024 our welfare, benefit and debt advice team helped:**

**651**

tenants claim

**£213,389**

in backdated benefits

**£226,760**

to help with debts

**£52,368**

grant awards

**£2,370,547**

in new benefits

**£333,996**

in Universal Credit

**£51,719**

in council tax reductions

If you need help or support with your finances get in touch with our team.  
Call 0800 316 0897





# The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service is an independent organisation that investigates and resolves disputes between tenants and leaseholders and social landlords like Two Rivers Housing. This is a free service for all tenants, and you can contact them at any time.

They work closely with the Regulator for Social Housing to help ensure that social landlords treat their tenants fairly.

## Ombudsman cases 2023-2024

In 2023/2024, a small number of tenants raised a complaint with the Housing Ombudsman service, you'll find a summary of this below.

- **6** cases were referred to the Housing Ombudsman during the 2023/2024 financial year.
- We received four decisions\* from the Housing Ombudsman during the year:
  - Two of these were severe maladministrations (one for record keeping and one for complaints handling)
  - The Ombudsman found no maladministration on one case.
  - The Ombudsman found that we had already taken reasonable action on the other.
- We have four more cases with the Ombudsman and are awaiting their decision.

\*Some cases were raised in previous years, but the Ombudsman decisions were received in 2023/2024.

# Complaint handling

All feedback, including complaints, is crucial in helping us understand how you feel about your home and our services. It helps us identify where we need to make improvements, what matters most to you and informs our future plans.

In 2023/2024 we received: **266** complaints

**139**

were dealt with through early resolution

**115**

went to Stage 1\*

**12**

went to Stage 2\*

\*In line with the Housing Ombudsman Code, our formal complaints process has two stages. You can find more about complaints on our website: [www.tworivershousing.org.uk](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk)

## How are we doing? Your feedback

In our 2023/2024 Tenant Satisfaction Measures, you told us we need to do better when it comes to handling complaints.



**41%** of tenants asked were very or fairly satisfied with the way we handled their complaint.

We also received **92** compliments from tenants.

## How to contact the Housing Ombudsman

### Write to:

The Housing Ombudsman Service  
PO Box 1484  
Unit D  
preston  
PR2 0ET

### Email:

[info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

### Telephone:

020 7831 1942

# Learning from complaints

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We take complaints very seriously and are committed to learning from what you tell us and using this to improve our services and how we deliver them. We have already made some changes to how we manage and handle complaints, which we hope will provide a better experience for you going forward. Alongside this, we've made the following changes to how we do things based on your feedback:

- Improved our approach to handling damp and mould cases, including establishing a dedicated team to manage all cases, simplifying our internal processes and raising awareness of our responsibilities amongst our team.
- Committed to completing a review of our repairs service with our Tenants' Voice Committee to understand the needs of our tenants and agree an action plan to improve the service we can offer to tenants.
- Reviewed how we manage anti-social behaviour cases and made changes to our tenancy compliance team and the processes used to manage anti-social behaviour.
- This has included implementing a risk-based approach that reviews the severity of anti-social behaviour against tenant vulnerabilities.
- Started work to strengthen our culture and bring customer service back into the heart of everything we do. This has included a review of our values and an increased focus on customer service in our strategic priorities, which will be launched in 2024.
- Continued to use lessons learned from complaints to continually improve our services and processes.

# Help us improve things

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We want to work with you to make Two Rivers Housing an organisation we can all be proud of.

So, if you'd like to be more involved in our decision making, help us improve our services or just share your feedback, please get in touch with our community engagement team.

There are already lots of ways you can have your say, including:

- Sharing your feedback with us, through any of our official communication channels.
- Joining our Tenants' Voice Committee
- Becoming part of our tenant communications and proofreading group.
- Completing surveys
- Being part of a focus group
- Joining our Your Views Facebook group

If you are interested in any of these, please get in touch:

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





# Keeping you safe

As your landlord, one of our responsibilities is to make sure that we do everything we can to keep your home safe. Each year, we complete key safety checks in your home to make sure that you and your family are safe. In our Tenant Satisfaction Measures, we asked 1,200 tenants if they felt safe in their home, here's what they told us:



84% of tenants asked felt that their home was safe.

Help us keep you safe!

Please let our team in to your home to complete these important safety checks.

## Landlord compliance

- 100% of asbestos safety checks were completed.
- 97% of water safety checks were completed\*.
- 100% of lift safety checks were completed.
- 100% of fire safety checks were completed.
- 99.97% of gas safety checks were completed\*.

\*At the end of the year, we had one home that did not have an up-to-date gas safety certificate. This was due to the tenant refusing to let us into the property. We are currently taking legal action to gain access to their home and complete the work. We also had one outstanding water safety risk assessment that was over its two yearly review date. This has since been completed along with any remedial action that was identified.

## Tackling anti-social behaviour

In 2023/2024 we opened and managed

164 anti-social behaviour cases.

of tenants asked were satisfied or very satisfied with how we handle anti-social behaviour in our communities.

67%

# In your neighbourhood

In our 2023/2024 Tenant Satisfaction Measures, we asked 1,200 tenants how well they think we manage our neighbourhoods. Here's what they told us:



75%

of tenants asked agreed that Two Rivers Housing made a positive contribution to their neighbourhood.



67%

of tenants asked were satisfied or very satisfied that we keep communal areas and shared spaces clean and well maintained

## In 2023/2024 our team dealt with...

65 reports of nuisance behaviour including noise nuisance

18 reports of drug related activity

29 reports of abusive or threatening behaviour

7 reports of dangerous pets or pet related complaints

22 reports of criminal activity

3 incidents relating to domestic violence

18 reports of attempted intimidation, harassment or verbal abuse

2 reports of hate crime

# Helping you find your home

In 2023/2024 we welcomed

new tenants into

**255**

of our homes

We helped

**31** tenants

move home through  
our mutual exchange  
programme

Helping you  
become a  
home owner

**2**

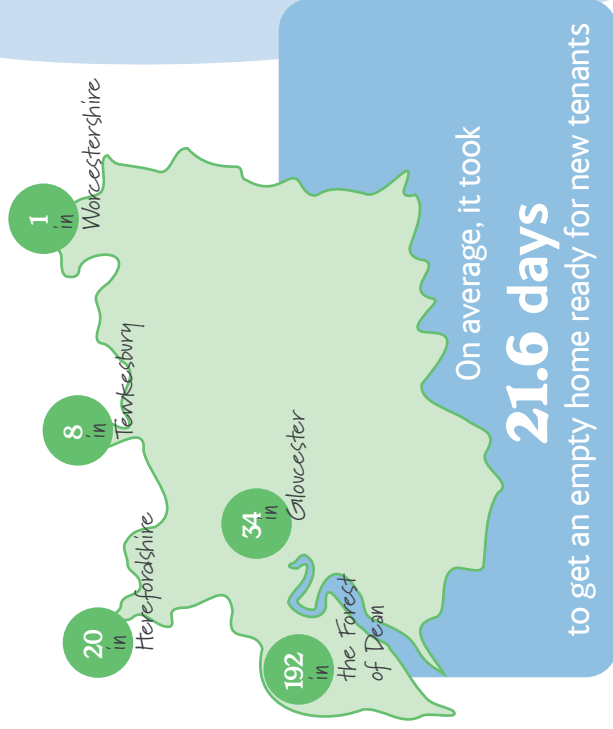
people bought their home  
through Right to Buy or  
Right to Acquire

**44**

people chose Shared  
Ownership

**3**

people bought their  
Shared Ownership  
home outright



# Building new homes

There are currently 136,000 families on the social housing waiting list in the southwest, which is why we are committed to increasing the availability of affordable housing in the areas that we serve.

In 2018, we pledged to build 1,000 new homes for families in our neighbourhoods by 2028 and we are well on the way to delivering that!

Since 2018, we've built...

**687** new homes for people in our communities.

In 2023/2024, we invested

**£25,278,000**

to build **178** new homes for families to live in.

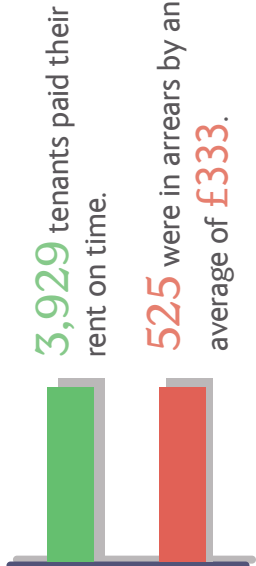
We also started work on another **71** new homes to help more people find a warm, safe, affordable home in our neighbourhoods.

Our development programme is mainly funded through private investment that we secured in 2020.



# Collecting your rent

As a not-for-profit organisation, our main source of income is the rent you pay. This is invested back into our homes or the cost of running the organisation and delivering the services we provide to you.



We also collected **£7,670** in recharges for items lost or broken.

## Collecting money owed by tenants that have moved on

Unfortunately, some tenants leave our homes still owing rent or having caused damage to the property. When this happens our income team does everything they can to recover the lost rent and charges in relation to any damage.

**£56,516** was collected from tenants who left owing money.

**£44,991** in rent and **£11,525** in property damage

**6** tenants were evicted for not paying their rent. Owing an average of **£3,239** each.

If you need help managing your finances, get in touch with our team. Call 0800 316 0897

# Managing our finances

Cash in	
Rent paid by tenants	£24,946,000
Property sales (Inc Shared Ownership)	£5,028,000
Interest received	£1,570,000
Other income	£812,000
Service charges	£835,000
Total cash in	£33,191,000

Cash out	
Developing homes & communities	£25,278,000
Maintaining our homes	£8,684,000
Management costs	£5,413,000
Service charge costs	£1,281,000
Loan repayments	£5,000,000
Interest paid	£5,365,000
Other fixed assets	£73,000
Total cash out	£51,094,000

Above is an overview of our finances for the year ending 31 March 2024. The majority of our development programme is funded through private investment.

The difference between cash in and cash out is funded by this long-term investment and has enabled us to build more homes for people in our communities where there is a desperate need for social housing.


## Read our full Annual Report

Our full Annual Report and Accounts is available on our website: [www.tworivershousing.org.uk](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk)

# More about Two Rivers Housing

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

 Rivers Meet, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent, Gloucestershire, GL18 1DS

 [www.linkedin.com/company/TwoRiversHousing](https://www.linkedin.com/company/TwoRiversHousing)

 [www.facebook.com/TwoRiversHousing](https://www.facebook.com/TwoRiversHousing)

 [www.x.com/TRHousing](https://www.x.com/TRHousing)

Company registration number: 4263691

Homes and Communities Agency number: L4385

Registered charity number: 1104723

Version: September 2024 (a)

## Want to know more?

This document was produced to provide our tenants with an overview of our performance during 2023/2024.

You can find more information on our 2023/2024 performance, including the documents below, in the library section of our website: ([www.tworivershousing.org.uk/news-library/publications/](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk/news-library/publications/)):

- Annual Report and Accounts 2023/2024
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2023/2024
- Complaints Report 2023/2024
- Value for Money Statement 2023/2024

## Tell us what you think!

If you'd like to share your feedback on this document or make suggestions for what you'd like to see in future versions, please email our communications team: [communications@2rh.org.uk](mailto:communications@2rh.org.uk).



# Keeping you safe in your home: Fire safety tips

Our homes are where we feel safest, but fire can pose a serious threat if we're not vigilant. As your landlord, your safety is our priority, and we do regular checks on the fire safety equipment in your home.

House fires are usually caused by items we all have in our homes and maybe take for granted. To help ensure you and your family are kept safe, we've provided some straightforward fire safety tips and reminders on fire safety in your home.

## Electrical safety: plugging into safe practices

Overloaded plug sockets and faulty appliances are common causes of house fires. Here's how you can avoid electrical hazards:

- Never plug multiple high-wattage appliances (like kettles, microwaves, or heaters) into a single socket or extension lead. Use extension leads with built-in surge protectors and avoid daisy-chaining multiple leads together (plugging extension leads into extension leads).
- Regularly check cables and plugs for signs of wear or damage and replace them if needed.

## Tumble dryers: keep an eye on your machine

Tumble dryers are a great convenience, but without proper maintenance, they can pose a fire risk. Keep your dryer safe by following these tips:

- Clean the lint filter after every use to prevent a buildup of flammable fibres.
- Don't overload the dryer, and only use it for recommended fabrics.
- Never leave the dryer running while you're out or asleep.

## Candles: reduce your risk

Candles are a wonderful way to create a warm, relaxing atmosphere, but they can also be a fire hazard if left unattended. To reduce the risk:

- Always place candles on a flat, stable surface, away from flammable materials like curtains or bedding.
- Never leave a lit candle unattended, especially if you're leaving the room or going to bed.
- Consider using battery-operated LED candles, which offer the same ambience without the risk of fire.

## General fire safety tips

Fires often catch us off guard, but preparation can make all the difference.

- Test your smoke alarms monthly and report any faults to us immediately. A working smoke alarm provides crucial early warning in case of a fire.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children and educate them about the dangers of fire.
- Have a fire escape plan in place and ensure everyone in your household knows what to do in an emergency.

## Star tip

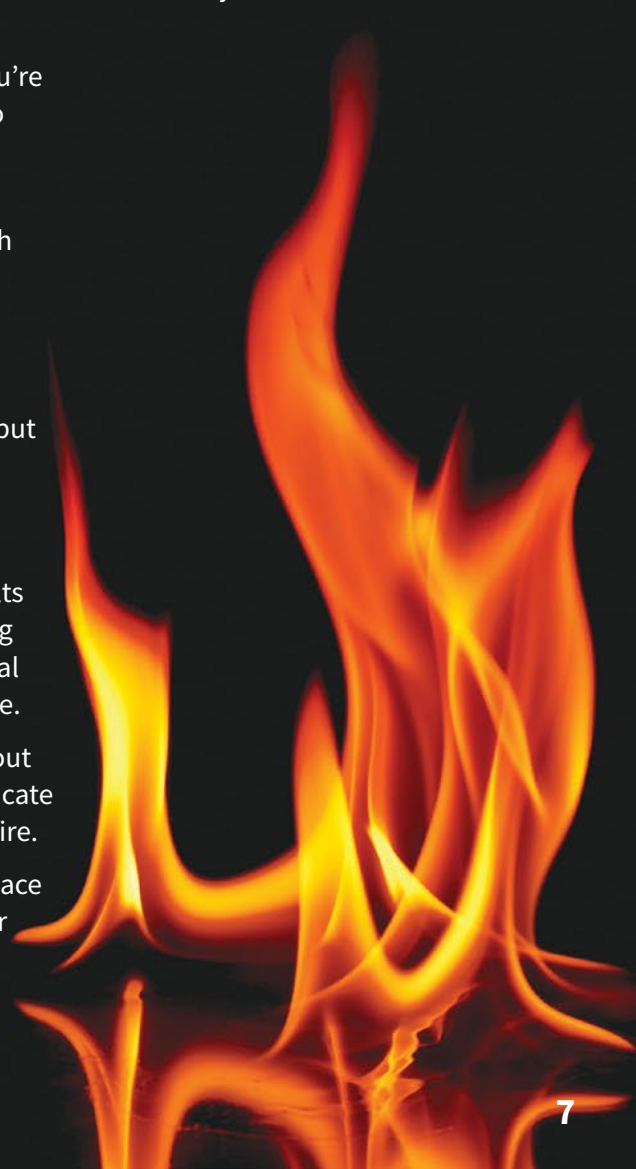
Check your smoke alarm regularly. If it's not working call us on  
**0800 316 0897**



## When to seek help

If you're ever unsure about fire safety measures in your home or your smoke alarm is not working, please get in touch with our team. We are here to help keep you and your family safe.

For more information or support, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your safety matters to us.





# Caring for our shared spaces

We know how important the shared spaces in our neighbourhoods are to you and your community. Whether it's a place for children to play, a spot to relax, or simply part of the view from your home, these areas matter.

We also know that we haven't always done as good a job as we should have in looking after them over the past few years. We want to say thank you for your patience and for sharing your feedback with us – it's helped us understand what needs to change.

We've already made some improvements to how we care for these spaces, but we know there's more to do. Going forward, we'll be working with tenants to review the service and find better ways to manage it in the future.

## Winter work is underway

Winter might bring shorter days and colder weather, but our team will be out and about keeping our communal spaces tidy and accessible. Between now and spring, they will visit each communal area at least once to carry out essential maintenance. Here's what you can expect during our winter programme:

- **Weed control:** Spraying communal hard-standing areas, garage sites, and parking spaces to keep weeds in check.
- **Moss removal:** Scrubbing moss from communal pathways and parking areas, where necessary, to keep surfaces safe.

- **Overgrowth clearance:** Clearing any overgrowth on communal pathways and ensuring all green waste is removed.
- **Hedges and shrubs:** Tidying up hedges and shrubs to keep the areas neat and well-maintained.
- **Tree management:** Cutting back and removing overhanging branches that obstruct pathways or reduce visibility at road junctions.
- **Flower bed care:** Sprucing up communal flower beds at our HomePlus sites to keep them looking their best.

This work ensures that communal areas remain safe, accessible, and enjoyable for everyone during the winter months.

## Looking ahead to spring

As we look forward to brighter days, our summer grass-cutting programme will resume in March. Until then, our winter maintenance will keep everything in good shape, so these shared spaces are ready for the return of warmer weather.

## Discover your neighbourhood with our new interactive map

We understand how important it is for you to know who looks after the green spaces in your neighbourhood. In the past, it hasn't always been easy to tell which areas Two Rivers Housing maintains and which are managed by other organisations like Gloucestershire Highways.

That's why we're excited to introduce our new interactive map, which will quickly show you which areas we are responsible for.

With this map, you can:

- See which land Two Rivers Housing owns and maintains in your area.
- Find out which grass-cutting programme applies to your neighbourhood.
- Access detailed information about different types of maintenance in each area.

Using the map is simple. You can search by postcode or zoom into the area you want to explore. The

areas marked with red stripes are owned by Two Rivers Housing. Beneath these stripes, blocks of colour provide details about the land, including the type of grass cutting or maintenance we do. A handy key explains what each colour means.

This tool is part of our commitment to making it easier for you to access the information you need. You'll find the map on our website, so why not explore the map today?

## Star tip

You can find the new mapping service on our website:  
[www.tworivershousing.org.uk/your-home/interactive-map](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk/your-home/interactive-map)





# Here to support you with **free** financial advice

We know that managing money can sometimes feel overwhelming, especially with the rising cost of living. That's why our welfare, benefit, and debt advice team is here to help. This free service is available to all Two Rivers Housing tenants and is designed to support you with:

- Budget planning and managing your finances.
- Applying for benefits or other sources of funding you may be eligible for.

If you're feeling the impact of rising costs, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our team – they're here to help.

We've also created a page on our website where you can quickly find links to other organisations that offer financial support and advice. You'll also find some simple tips to reduce the energy you use in your homes.

Visit our website for more details and practical ways to make a difference.

## Star tip

If you need help or support with your finances, please get in touch with our team:

**0800 316 0897**





# Welcome home!

## New homes coming to Berry Hill



*New homes taking shape at Marian's Walk*

We're building 17 new homes at Marian's Walk in Berry Hill, Coleford! These homes will include houses, flats, and bungalows, with four of them available to buy through Shared Ownership. This is a government scheme that helps people buy a home by paying for part of it while renting the rest.

The new homes will be ready in 2025 and are designed to be warm and energy-efficient, which means families living there can save money on their energy bills.

We're also doing our best to look after nature in the area by adding a small orchard, boxes for bats, birds, and dormice, and leaving special areas to grow wild for wildlife to enjoy.

Two of the bungalows will be fully wheelchair accessible, thanks to help from NHS Gloucestershire. We also got a grant from Homes England and the Forest of Dean District Council to help fund the project.



*Our exec team visited Marian's walk in November to see how the build is going*

*Head of Development Angharad Hodge with the Homes England team at Marian's Walk*



Our Head of Development, Angharad, visited the site recently and was excited to see how it's all coming together. She took partners from Homes England with her and met with our development partners Mike Etheridge Construction at the site.

These homes will help more families have a warm, safe, affordable place to live in our community!

## Creating more affordable homes in Staunton

We're excited to share that work is now underway to regenerate Johnstone

Close in Staunton, where we're creating 20 new affordable homes for local families. Our development team have been hard at work completing all the necessary approvals to move the project forward.

In July, we signed a contract with J Harper & Sons (Leominster) Limited to demolish the old properties and begin building new homes that will better meet the needs of the community.

Demolition is now well underway. Fixtures and fittings have been carefully removed, and materials containing asbestos have been safely cleared. With the big machines on-site, we're moving closer to starting construction.

We're committed to making more affordable homes available in our communities and as our Development Manager, Terri explains, "This project will help meet the urgent need for affordable family homes in Staunton."

It's fantastic to see the regeneration of Johnstone Close finally taking shape and we can't wait to welcome people to their new homes when the site is complete!







Jas, who organised the event, drawing the raffle

# Cake and a cuppa

– our team support Macmillan Coffee Morning

Our team came together in September to raise money for Macmillan with a cake and coffee morning. Members of the team baked (and ate!) cakes and goodies to remember those we've lost and raise much needed funds for cancer support.

The day was made extra special by the amazing spread of treats. From homemade millionaire shortbread to lemon and blueberry cake, flapjacks, and cupcakes, there was something for everyone. But Jasmine's sausage rolls were a runaway hit and vanished in no time – thank you to everyone who brought something to share.

Alongside the cakes and goodies, some of the team brought in raffle prizes, which were raffled off in the afternoon.

We raised an incredible £256.75 through donations and raffle ticket sales. Every penny will go to Macmillan Cancer Support to help people living with cancer.



Cakes and savouries sold on the day!

## Join our team!

We are always looking for amazing people to join our team and help us make a difference in our communities.

#Together we can help support thousands of families across the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire and the surrounding areas. If you are looking for a rewarding role in a dedicated team and share our belief that everyone should have a warm, safe, affordable home – take a look at our current vacancies.

If your experience looks a little different to what we're looking for, but you think your great skills and can-do attitude can help us deliver for our customers, we'd love to hear from you.

To view our current opportunities, visit:  
[www.tworivershousing.org.uk/careers](http://www.tworivershousing.org.uk/careers)

## Star tip

If you would like to work with us, but can't see a role advertised that suits your skills and career ambition, why not send us your CV?  
Email: [recruitment@2rh.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@2rh.org.uk)



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

Which of these Winter words is missing from the wordsearch?

Blanket Skating  
 Freezing Slush  
 Jumper Snowboard  
 Mittens Snowman  
 Raincoat Thermals  
 Scarf Thermometer

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

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

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

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

## Winter 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 **28 February 2025** will win a £15 gift voucher.

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

Good luck!

## Win a £15 voucher!

Grab a pen and a cuppa, sit back and complete our wintertime 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.  
Freephone **0800 316 0897** Email **customerservices@2rh.org.uk**



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