

ENCIRCLE
HOUSING
ANNUAL
REPORT
2023





WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

We are delighted to bring you our latest Annual Report. The last 12 months have been challenging with the high cost of living, energy costs, budget and staff pressures within the supported living care sector. We have been focusing on supporting our tenants through these times, working hard to increase the number of new specialist homes, whilst improving the quality of our current properties and the services we offer.

Ensuring our tenants' homes are safe and security is a priority for us. We carry out regular inspections and assessments that meet the regulatory requirements as standard, and work behind the scenes to routinely check our properties, such as for fire related risks.

Working together with our tenants we have been reducing utility bills and making savings. Seeking the best tariffs and claiming government grant entitlements for utilities has benefited our tenants.

At the start of 2023 and following over 12 months of improvements, Encircle Housing adopted The National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020. We comply with the current Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards and assess our performance against the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

For the last couple of years, we have asked our tenants and other important people in their lives for their views about our landlord services as part of our annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey. This year we are pleased to report that we have increased the number of people taking part from 87 to 277. We would like to thank our care provider partners for their partnership and support over the last 12 months, as well as their assistance with our tenant engagement activities. Many of the results of our last Tenant Satisfaction Survey are shared in this report as we reflect on our achievements over the last 12 months.

We have also been working on our Tenant Involvement Plan. The number of tenants who have registered their interest in getting involved has risen from 33 to 166. We are running our first pilot focus group soon and we are really looking forward to working with everyone.

We are here to help and support our tenants, and we want to encourage all our tenants to help us too – whether this is reporting damp and mould as soon as it appears, advice with paying bills, or other housing matters. By talking to us as soon as anything arises, we can work together to resolve it.

Many people have contributed to this report, and we would like to say a special thank you to everyone along with those that have supported us throughout the year.

We hope you enjoy reading our report.

DAVID BAYBUT

CHAIR OF THE BOARD

PETER AVISTON

MANAGING DIRECTOR



"We're really proud of Charlie and his home; he has a life that he enjoys and shares with others,"

said Marianne,
Charlie's Mother.

Photo provided by Charlie, Encircle Housing tenant

CHARLIE AND ABBIE- ROSE'S STORY

Having the perfect home and surrounds has transformed Charlie and Abbie-Rose's lives. Many different housing options were explored before the gorgeous house was donated through a Trust, and Encircle Housing became the chosen landlord. 4Eden, who's employees are named Coach4Independence enable Abbie-Rose and Charlie to develop skills and increase independence in their home and community.

"My husband and I wanted a forever home that Charlie could share with a couple of friends," said Marianne, Charlie's Mother. "It took many years; and if you follow your dream, it can happen. If you think it is impossible still do it, and always look for the opportunities.

We thought we had exhausted all our options when we were approached by a donor. We were overwhelmed with joy as they wanted to donate a house in the area we were looking at. The Lakeland Autistic Charity Trust was set up, and my husband and I became Trustees along with three others. The house was donated through the Trust for Charlie to share with housemates leading to companions and friendship.

We chose Encircle Housing as the landlord, and they have been on hand to provide help and support around any tenancy matters. They also carried out all the compliance checks on the property.

The house is perfect; it's spacious, modern, and peaceful – Charlie loves it. There are eight properties by the side of a farmhouse, and it has its own little community. There are fields all around. The local village is down the road with all the shops and activities. We are also planning to retire to the next village along so can see Charlie regularly.

Charlie was settling in well and getting to know the care the new staff team staff who do a great job. Abbie-Rose who lived locally was interested in moving in. She was introduced to Charlie, and they got to know each other. They get got on well and after a while she moved in."

Read their full story, go to www.encircleha.co.uk/about-us/

OUR VISION

Creating the right home and environment for every person

OUR MISSION

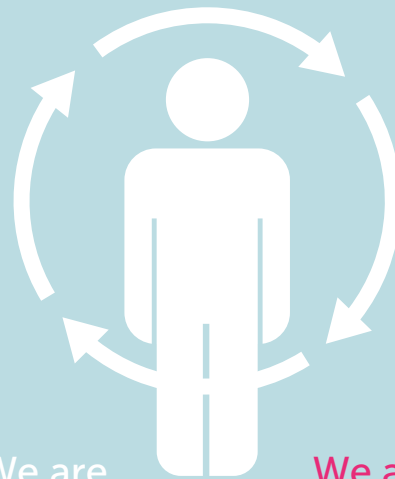
To provide specialised supported housing and advice to enable people to thrive in their lives

OUR VALUES



We are **honest**, respectful and open about everything we say and do

We **understand** people's housing needs and do our best to help people achieve their goals



We are committed to help our tenants find a **personalised** housing option

We are **approachable** and passionate about everything we do



ABOUT US



WHO WE ARE

Encircle Housing was set up in 2018. We are passionate about providing homes for people with a wide range of needs in supported housing across the UK. Some of our tenants have a learning disability, mental health needs, sensory impairments and/or physical disabilities. We also house the homeless and those leaving care homes.

Encircle Housing can only provide specialist supported housing by working closely with others including our tenants, care providers, families, professionals, funders, investors, private and social landlords, local and health authorities.

We strive to provide housing that meets the needs of individuals that would otherwise be more likely to live in institutional or residential care settings at a greater expense. Our aim is to find new and cost-effective models of housing for people who have support needs that cannot be met in general needs social housing.

MEETING REGULATORY STANDARDS

We are now over four years on from the Regulator of Social Housing's April 2019 Regulatory Notice, and the Board is pleased to report that Encircle Housing has addressed most of the Regulator's concerns and continues to make further improvements working collaboratively with the Regulator. We have continued our programme of audits by our internal auditor TIAA, and further details are provided in this report.

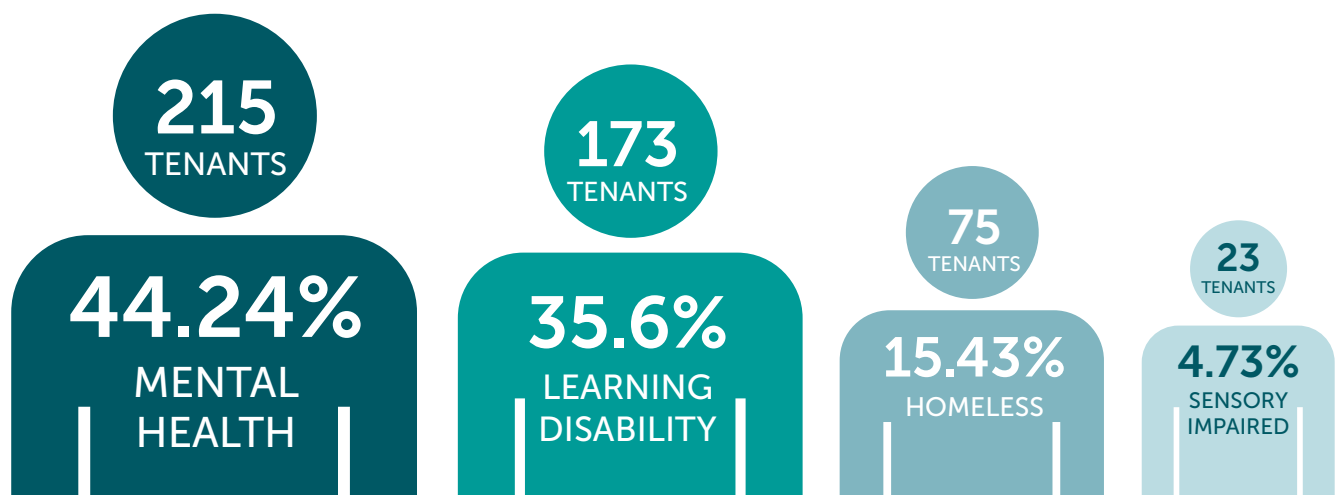
INDEPENDENT AUDIT

Encircle Housing has been accredited the following by our independent auditors, TIAA:

- Substantial Assurance in our Allocations Lettings Review
- Reasonable Assurance in our Management of Void Homes
- Reasonable Assurance for Responsive Repairs
- Reasonable Assurance for Procurement

Encircle Housing continues to work proactively with our landlords to improve the financial viability of our properties and is also looking at alternative funding models. We know how the sector has been chronically underfunded for many years, with very limited public subsidy. New forms of lease-based housing with less risk for Encircle Housing can offer a real solution, and our new developments through partnerships with care providers that own their own properties, and private debt (direct mortgage lending) is creating much needed quality accommodation and care to be proud of.

ABOUT OUR TENANTS





STANDARDS AND QUALITY

We continue to work closely with other specialist housing providers to improve the standard, quality and effectiveness of our own organisations. We discuss current and future housing matters across the sector, so we plan effectively to provide the specialist supported housing that is needed.

CHALLENGES

We work with other organisations and discuss the challenges across the sector, including the heavily regulatory framework and scrutiny and Housing Benefit. We continue to look at ways to provide the housing and services that people in specialist supported housing rely on with less resources than some of the other larger housing providers.

PEOPLE'S QUOTE

Meet Clare Hurd, Repairs and Service Charge Coordinator

"I'm very excited to be working alongside such dedicated and talented people to deliver the services to our tenants and help to meet their needs. It's great to know that I'm making a difference."



GROWING OUR TEAM

We warmly welcomed new members to the team. New roles have been introduced to support the administration of our service charges, rental income and managing a property for homeless people.

We also strengthened the organisation by bringing financial management inhouse ahead of our service contract ending with Change Housing. We established a team of three people to deliver the core financial services, taking our organisation to 23 employees.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We value all our colleagues and have equality in the workplace. We have a small diverse team and ensure people have a work life balance through our flexible approach. Through inclusivity we gather different people's perspectives, and many have led to helping us shape our organisation.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

From late 2022 we have been preparing for migration of ICT platforms and support to a new managed service provider. The migration was fully implemented shortly after the end of the financial year. At the start of 2023 we also migrated our housing management system to an upgraded and more secure cloud based operating environment.

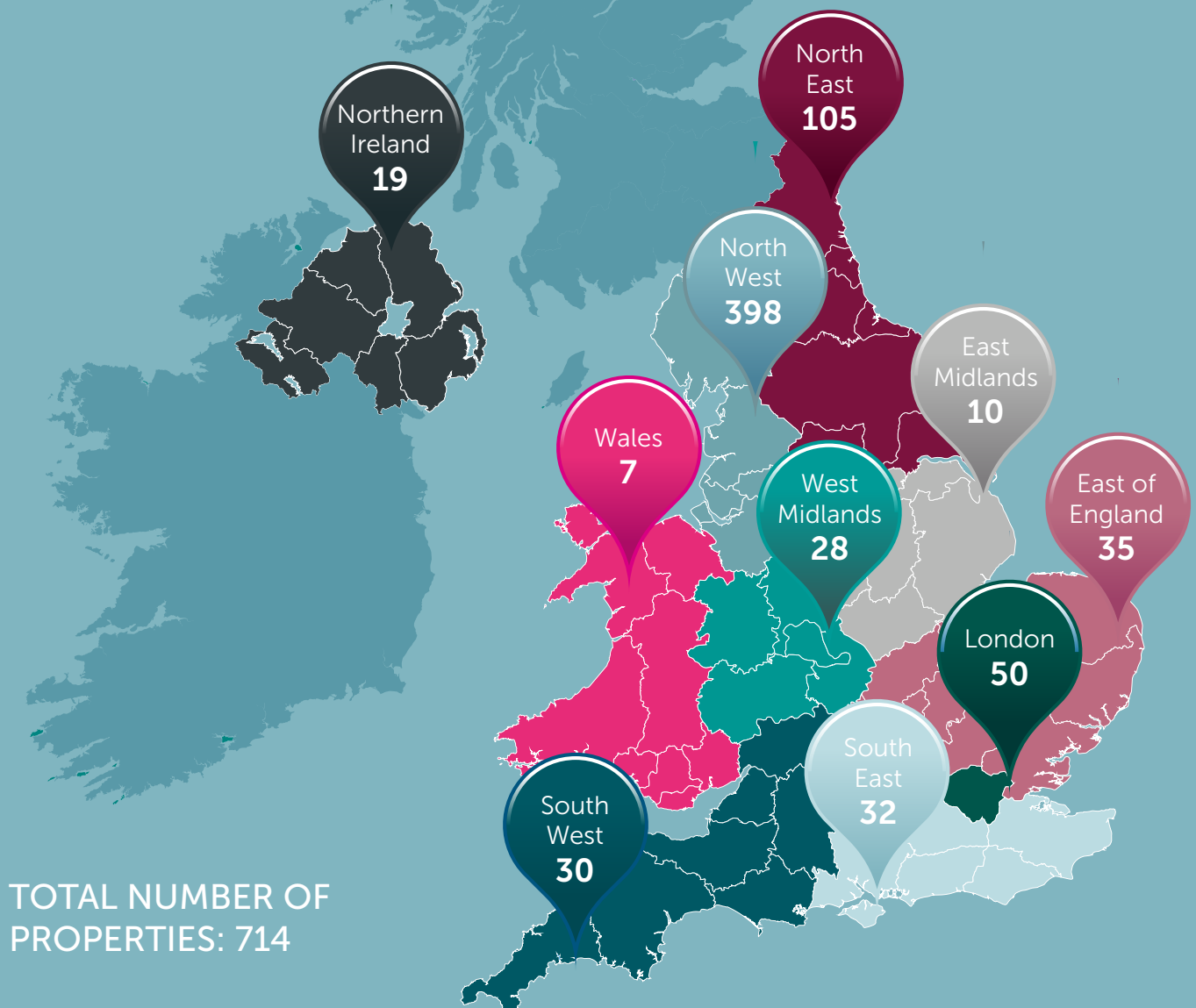
PEOPLE'S HOMES

In 2022/23, 158 people moved into their new home across the country

	2023	2022	2021
Supported living homes	579	595	596
Residential care homes	135	135	165
Managed by partners	0	51	22
TOTAL	714	781	783

Having a home for many years may be the choice for some, while others may only stay a short period of time. Generally, most people moving into homeless accommodation only stay for short period of time before successfully moving into independent living or other types of housing.

OUR PROPERTIES



TOTAL NUMBER OF
PROPERTIES: 714

MEET OUR TEAM

BOARD OF NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Our Non-Executive Directors have vast knowledge and experience across the housing sector. They provide an independent view on the running of Encircle Housing, its governance, and best practice. The Board oversees the strategic direction, risk management, and monitoring of performance.

Members of our Board are part of the Audit and Risk Sub Committee that scrutinises the overall performance of Encircle Housing every quarter. Regular meetings are also held with our auditors, TIAA.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Our Board members complete a register of interests where applicable that can be made available on request.

THE TEAM



**DAVID
BAYBUT**

Non-Executive
Chair

David is a solicitor with over 30 years' experience in real estate acting for businesses, housing associations and local authorities. He is also a Non-Executive Director at several other housing associations. David enjoys walking and running.



**MICHAEL
WHITEHEAD**

Non-Executive
Director

Michael is an experienced Finance Director and Non-Executive Director. He has extensive experience in housing and commercial businesses. He is married with two grown up children and enjoys playing tennis and walks in picturesque scenery.



**ALISTAIR
HOW**

Non-Executive
Director

Alistair's worked in marketing and business development before running care operations. He is now a Non-Executive Director including being chair of a visual impaired charity. Alistair enjoys photography as a hobby and supporting his local scout group.



**MATTHEW
SPITTLES**

Non-Executive
Director

After retiring from being an Executive Director in the housing sector, Matthew is currently working as a part-time Director of Maintenance. He enjoys walking, cycling and camping and is a volunteer, supporting young people with the DofE programme.

You can read the full biographies on our website, go to: www.encircleha.co.uk/about-us/

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Management Team are responsible for the day-to-day running of Encircle Housing and work closely with colleagues and the Board of Non-Executive Directors.

THE TEAM



**PETER
AVISTON**

Managing
Director, and
Board member

Peter has worked in the housing, regeneration, and economic development sectors for over 25 years, gaining senior level experience with housing associations and local authorities. Peter is a fan of rugby union and enjoys home DIY.



**WENDY
HOUSLEY**

Finance
Business
Partner

Wendy has worked across various industries and sectors, covering both public and private sector. She is new to housing since joining Encircle in July this year, but enjoying the challenge that a new sector brings.



**EMMA
PEPLOE**

Head of
Housing

Emma has worked in the social housing and social care sector for 22 years, with the last eight years mainly in Specialist Supported Housing. Emma hobbies include watercolour painting, cooking, swimming, and walking her gorgeous cockapoo, Otis.



**MARK
FELTON**

Head of Asset
Management

Mark has worked within maintenance for 25 years in social housing and more recently 10 in Specialist Supported Housing. Mark is passionate about travelling, especially in his campervan across the country and around Europe.



**NICKY
THOMPSON**

Communication and
Tenant Involvement
Manager

Nicky has worked within the supported living sector for over 22 years, mainly within communications and enabling tenants to have their say. She is passionate about dance, complimentary therapy, walking and travelling.



CUSTOMER CHARTER

Everything we do has our tenants and customers in mind. Our first Customer Charter was published in 2023 so you know what you can expect from us and the services we provide.

The Charter provides information about our services across our teams including housing, repairs, a person's home, tenant involvement, our performance and what we should do if things go wrong.

READ OUR CUSTOMER CHARTER


Our Customer Charter can be found in the publications section on our website, go to:
www.encircleha.co.uk/about-us/

TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY


Gathering views continues to be a priority for us; it's only with the help of tenants and other important people in their life can we truly get it right. That is why we have continued to improve our approach.

Our latest survey included the questions from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures to enable us to provide information to the government. We also used this opportunity to seek other feedback on other important matters to our tenants and our values.


IMPROVING OUR APPROACH



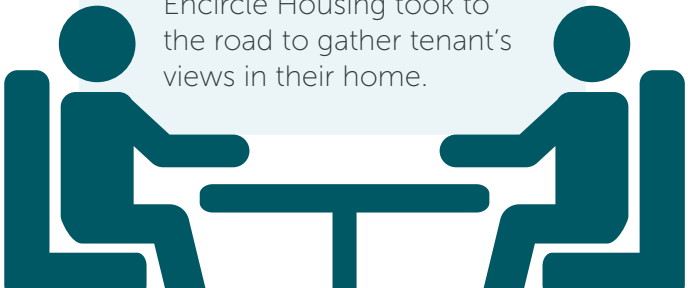
Over 56% of our tenants took part in our latest annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey; this is an increase of **over 32%** from the previous year. We understand our tenants respond better to face-to-face visits and because of that we got more response.



We created an easy read postal and online survey, so the information was accessible.



Our ecampaign asked for the help of our care providers to encourage and support our tenants to complete the survey.



Members from across Encircle Housing took to the road to gather tenant's views in their home.

TENANT SATISFACTION - OVERALL

This is the overall satisfaction of our services. You will see more results under each section and areas for improvements.

- 98% responded. **84% of tenants are very satisfied or fairly satisfied** with the overall service they receive from us
- 36 tenants responded to the question about making a complaint within the last 12 months. **Nearly 67% are very satisfied or fairly satisfied** with our approach to handling the complaint. We are improving this by gathering face-to-face feedback and ensuring tenants know how to make a complaint

COMPLAINTS

Our staff have been trained on how to handle complaints. We follow the latest Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code 2022 and complete our self-assessment every year.

During 2022 we received 2 formal complaints and 4 informal complaints:

3 were related to repairs and maintenance.

3 were related to housing.

2 formal complaints were resolved at stage 1, both within 2-6 days of our 20-day target.

We are a small organisation and the number of complaints is low. As part of our Tenant Involvement Plan, we are going to be working alongside tenants to update an easy read version of our Complaints Procedure to ensure our information is accessible. We are going to ensure that any informal complaints and outcomes are recorded consistently on our system.

OUR COMPLAINTS INFORMATION

You can read our Complaints Policy, Procedure and Self-Assessment on our website, go to:

www.encircleha.co.uk/tenant-information/



Scan the QR code for our Complaints Policy

RESULTS ARE IN!

In our Tenant Satisfaction Survey, we asked what term we should use when addressing the people who we house.

Tenants got the highest vote, with 133 people choosing this term. We will be using this from now on.



TENANT INVOLVEMENT



Tenant involvement has continued to be developed and changes have been made across our teams. Our Tenant Involvement Plan is to begin by asking tenants what is important to them and thereafter developed further with their help. Most recently, we have seen a rise in the number of tenants wanting to get involved.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022/23

- We produced quarterly tenant newsletters, Our Voice that was sent to all tenants and care providers
- 277 Tenant Satisfaction Surveys were completed via post, tenant visits and online. 176 were completed by tenants, 88 by tenants and care providers and 13 by either tenants' family members or by their care provider. This has resulted in a higher involvement with tenants in 2023
- 7 tenants and other people shared their stories
- Leaflets for energy saving and damp and mould were sent to our tenants, and tips shared in Our Voice
- We also featured tips on fire safety, security and electrical safety in Our Voice
- Held Making a Difference Days at four of our properties to improve external or internal areas in partnership with our tenants

TENANT SATISFACTION - TENANT INVOLVEMENT

Out of 277 completed Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023:

90%

of tenants responded.

88%



of tenants are very satisfied or fairly satisfied that we treat tenants with respect. We are improving this through face-to-face visits to gather their views.

98%

of tenants responded.

73%



of tenants are very satisfied or fairly satisfied that we are open and honest. We are continuing to build relationships and through our involvement plan more tenants will help to shape our services.

89%

of tenants responded.

75%



of tenants are very satisfied or fairly satisfied that we keep tenants informed about things that matter to them. We are improving this by increasing the number of copies of Our Voice to tenant homes and emailing it to care providers to share with our tenants.

88%

of tenants responded.

74%



of tenants are very satisfied or fairly satisfied that we listen to tenants' views and act on them. We are setting up our first pilot focus groups to gather more tenant views.



MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

- Our Tenant Involvement Plan will be produced and approved by the Board
- We are developing our new approach to gather more views in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Tenants will be helping us to develop our Tenant Involvement Strategy
- We are asking tenants to help us to develop Our Voice and the topics of interest



TENANT INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Encircle Housing is working with tenants to find out what housing matters are important to them and talk about our services. We want to continue improving our services and find out what we are getting right. Our plan will develop and change with the help of our tenants.

WHAT TENANTS WANT TO TALK ABOUT

We asked tenants what services they want to talk about in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey. We are holding focus groups to find out what other matters are important to them. We will be in touch with everyone with the plan of our next steps. Huge thank you to everyone who has been take part so far.



YOU SAID...

YOU SAID:

To be listened to and communicated with. To be told who people are and when meetings are. For requests to be acted upon and not just empty promises that never happen.

WE DID:

We have done more face-to-face visits with tenants in their homes throughout the year. We visited tenants in their homes to gather their views for our tenant satisfaction survey.

...WE DID

YOU SAID:

There is lack of knowledge about what Encircle Housing does.

WE DID:

Each issue of Our Voice newsletter explains what each team has been doing and we have created a Customer Charter so people know what to expect from us.

HOUSING TEAM



Our Housing Team has been working across the country to provide new homes, tenancy related support and advocacy, and improving our systems.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022/23

- 83% of our homes were tenanted at the end of March 2023, this increased to nearly 86% in September 2023
- 158 tenants moved into our homes
- Our Housing Managers have completed 658 tenancy related support visits to work alongside our tenants in their homes
 - We have attended 284 professional multi-agency meetings to support our tenants
 - We now work with over 60 local authorities
 - We have made 5 safeguarding referrals across 5 local authorities

IAN'S STORY

Dear Sirs

I would like to officially acknowledge my utmost gratitude for the help, support and kindnesses I received from the Manager and the entire team of dedicated people you have based at Golders Green.

I have been re-housed after a 17 month stay at the establishment and can honestly say they were a huge difference between me coping or not with the huge lifestyle change I found myself in. Although my actual needs were minimal compared to some, I witnessed firsthand their ability to deal with every incident or problem that came their way.

I commend your company for the help it is giving to the vulnerable in the community, but I am sure you will understand when I say I wish it was unnecessary, but that is a forlorn hope.

Thanks once again to all who were there for me and may your endeavours continue to be successful.

Regards
Ian, ex-tenant

TENANT SATISFACTION - HOUSING TEAM

Out of 277 completed Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023:

64%
of tenants responded.

74%

of tenants were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour. We are improving this by listening and acting upon your feedback by involving you in agreeing an action plan to address your anti-social behaviour complaint.

75%
of tenants responded.



65%

of tenants were very satisfied or fairly satisfied that we are making a positive contribution to your neighbourhood. This question was confusing to tenants as we provide supported housing in the community not large housing estates.

MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

- Our Specialist Supported Housing guide is being created for tenants and partners and other professionals
- We are developing a digital housing application form that is easy to complete
- We are changing to new cloud-based system to improve ways of remote working and provide greater protection and security from cyber attack
- An updated version of our contact management system, Sassha 360 is being launched to improve our recording system that supports the needs of our tenants and customer insight data
- Through listening to tenants, we are going to hold more regular meetings to involve them
- We are launching our Hard to Let Strategy that will also improved our voids management

TENANCY RELATED SUPPORT

Importantly, we have continued to build our landlord relationship with our tenants. By creating our Specialised Supported Landlord Services brochure, tenants and partners can easily see how we help in easy steps.

During 2022/23, we have visited tenants in their home to work alongside them, advocated on their behalf to support with housing matters and worked with professionals to ensure our tenants reach the best outcome.

HOUSING VACANCIES

Some of our properties and shared homes have vacancies. We work closely with commissioners and care providers to ensure these are offered to the right people quickly.

Once we are aware of a housing vacancy, we arrange a meeting with the care provider to agree an action plan along with the Commissioning Team in the area. Where necessary we produce a property marketing brochure that features the details.

We have taken the recommendations from TIAA including improving our voids process and implemented our voids management module to increase accountability and measure performance. Now our improved content management system includes more in-depth recording, monitoring and reporting of voids. Our Board has approved the void performance measures to provide more details such as the length of time, repair work and any loss of money.



LUCY'S STORY

Having the right home and support has been life changing for Lucy – she has never looked back. After meeting her care team and choosing the spacious apartment in newly refurbished property in Chorley, she knew this was the right decision.

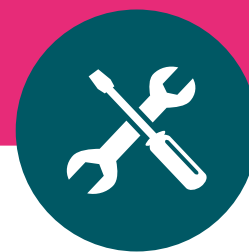
"Everything about living here is right," said Lucy. "I felt like I could call it home before I'd even moved in. I never knew what it meant to have your needs met until I moved here. Everyone is helpful and I get on well with the managers and seniors. There is a lot of respect and support."

Read Lucy's full story, go to www.encircleha.co.uk/about-us/

Help us to help you

We carry out tenant visits throughout the year to provide tenancy related support. If any of our tenants have any concerns about their tenancy, home or wellbeing, please get in touch our Housing Team on **0330 390 0517** or email contactus@encircleha.co.uk

REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE



During 2022/23, we began using more local contractors alongside the larger providers. This has helped us to meet our priorities and carry out repairs within our response times. We have been improving our ways of working and maintained high standards to keep our tenants' homes safe.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022/23

- We invested £848,819 on reactive repairs, compliance and major works
- We reduced the average wait time for a repair from 9.15 days to 7.74 days
- We have improved our first-time fix rate on completed repairs to 92%
- 92% of all repair jobs were completed on time
- 100% of fire risk assessments completed on time

TENANT SATISFACTION - REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Out of 277 completed Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023:

98%

of tenants responded.

91%



of tenants were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the safety and security of their home. We are improving this by ensuring that high standard locks are fitted to all external doors and checking the quality of these doors annually.

67%

of tenants responded.

80%



of those tenants were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with our repairs service. We are improving this by follow up calls and tighter monitoring of outstanding repairs.

63%

of tenants responded.

81%



of our tenants are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the time it takes to complete a repair. We are improving this by working with our contractors to fix more repairs during the first visit.

MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

- We are streamlining the process of having a gas test completed, so most of these tests are completed in the summer avoiding winter issues
- We are going to undertake a fire risk assessment internally to give us greater control of the findings, actions and issues faced within our homes. The teams will be trained to complete these safely
- We are no longer working with a number of contractors as they are unable to meet our enhanced repairs service to our tenants
- We are working with a major paint manufacturer to develop hard wearing durable paints for our new Painting Programme starting in late 2023

HIGH STANDARDS

We maintained our repairs performance with the support of our teams by focussing more on getting jobs right first time. Our surveyors have post inspected 12% of all works raised, focussed on more expensive and/or complex works, to ensure that our contractors standards are maintained.

WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS AND PARTNERS

We signed an extension to our gas service and maintenance contract that helped to reduced costs. This means that more money is available to spend on improvement work to our tenants' homes.

We have set up accounts with major suppliers for materials, so the costs of items have been agreed and we are getting value for money.

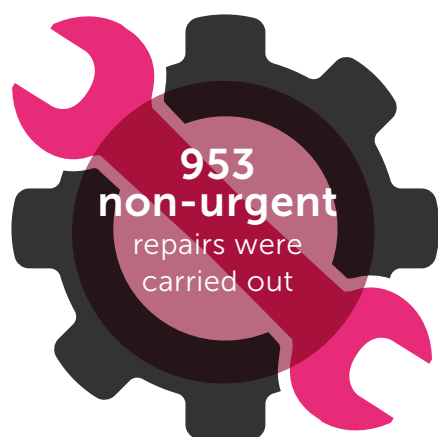
WHAT WE SPENT

In 2022/23, we spent £848,819 on repairs, planned maintenance and compliance work to our tenant's homes across the country.



HOW WE SPENT OUR MONEY

TYPE OF WORK	COST
Day-to-day repairs	£435,303
Planned maintenance	£148,287
Compliance works including fire safety, servicing, gas safety and electrical works	£174,018
Work on empty properties	£91,211





ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- We have installed solar panels as part of a grant funded scheme
- We have cleaned a large number of heating systems to ensure that sludge is removed and making the radiators more efficient
- We have installed better boilers that give out more heat into some of our tenants' homes where it was deemed appropriate.

YOU SAID...

...WE DID

YOU SAID:

Improve our repairs service.

WE DID:

We are carrying out quarterly courtesy call to our tenants' homes to check quality of the repair work. Our surveyors are also doing post inspection work on properties.

YOU SAID:

Reduce the amount of time it takes to carry out a repair.

WE DID:

We have worked with contractors to increase the number of repairs completed during the first visit to 92% from 89%. Our new easy read leaflet, 'How to report a repair' includes a list of all the details we need to know, otherwise we may need to ask for further information which can cause a delay.



Help us to help you

We are committed to removing damp and mould from our tenants' homes and need our tenants to help us. Report any signs of damp and mould at the earliest opportunity or anything that may cause damp. Call our Repairs Team on 0330 094 0142 or email repairs@encircleha.co.uk



We have a dedicated service that supports the compliance of our properties.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022/23

- 100% gas tests were undertaken within time and completed certificates issued
- 100% electrical safety certificates were completed and issued
- 100% of our fire safety programme was completed including remedial works

MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

- We have completed the high and medium actions from our fire risk assessments
- We have reviewed all our assets and ensure that all the information on compliance is recorded onto our housing management system
- We are continuing to check on the compliance documents held on site by undertaking our health checks

KEEPING OUR TENANTS' HOMES SAFE

SAFETY CERTIFICATES

Our Compliance Supervisor oversees our compliance paperwork so our tenants' homes have the legally required documentation. Any areas that are identified for improvements are reviewed by our surveyors and works are actioned. This ensures we provide a safe and warm environment for our tenants.

SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL DELIVERY

We have increased the number of contractors we work with including those who provide a local service. We would like the same contractors visiting our tenants' homes, so they get to know who they are and receive a good service. Sometimes we need to get out a specialist to carry out the work, such as boiler repairs and always ensure any contractor we send out is fully qualified.

IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

Every month we track our performance and report this to our Board over a rolling 12-month period. By monitoring our performance, we can quickly make improvements should this not meet our target.

REINFORCED AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE (RAAC)

Our surveyors have undertaken a desktop review and identified five of our properties that require a more detailed investigation for RAAC. They will carry out the investigation work by December 2023 and we will seek specialised structural engineer advice if required.

YOU SAID...

...WE DID

YOU SAID:

Tenants wanted wipeable walls in their homes.

WE DID:

Our new Homes Standard includes durable paints that are fire resistant. We have created a new paint colour palette including feature wall colours that tenants can choose from.



THE RIGHT HOME AND ENVIRONMENT

A person's wants, needs and aspirations is at the centre of finding the right home and environment. Sometimes a property requires to be specially adapted to meet the person's needs. By working closely with our new tenant, their family, care provider and everyone else involved, our new tenant can live independently in their own home and community.



SHORT-TERM LEASES

We decided not to enter any further long leases for properties back in 2020. Since then, we have been providing homes using our short-term lease model and filling our current housing vacancies.

In 2022/23, we used our short-term lease model to provide homes for 11 people in eight new properties across the country. Many of the tenants were moving into their first home after living in care home or hospital. Most of the properties have been purchased by the housing arm of a care provider. The other properties have been bought through a Trust Fund or an investor developer willing to lease properties with less risk to Encircle Housing.

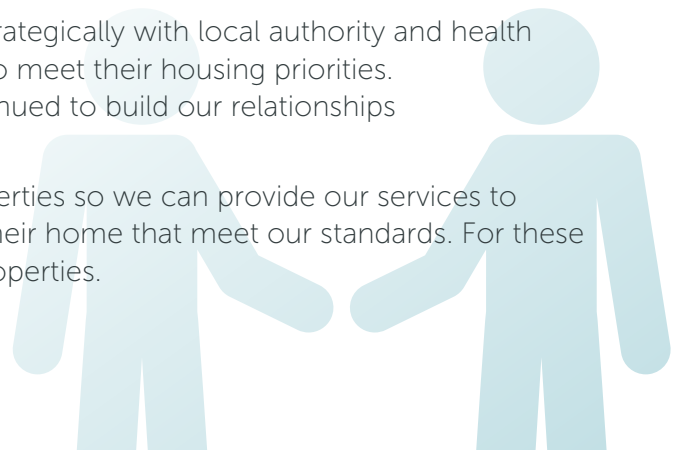
Since April, many more tenants have benefited from moving into their new home, and we have included some of the properties in this report.

PARTNERSHIPS

Working together is key to the success of a person moving into their home. This year has seen us building closer partnerships with care providers who own their own properties and want to work with registered providers to provide the housing element.

We partnered with five new care providers and worked strategically with local authority and health authority Commissioners in the East and West Midlands to meet their housing priorities. We now work in over 60 local authorities, and have continued to build our relationships with funders, developers and private and social landlords.

We took the strategic step to take full control of our properties so we can provide our services to tenants and responsible for how the money is spent on their home that meet our standards. For these reasons we no longer have third parties managing our properties.



ABBIE-ROSE'S STORY

"I really like living here. Me and Charlie are friends, and we help each other out. Now I've got lots of space. We can be in the same room or go into another room to have our own time.

I've got a garden and like being outdoors, the air is clean here. I've grown tomatoes, strawberries, and sweet peas in our back garden. Charlie helped to plant and water them too."



Photo provided by Abbie-Rose, Encircle Housing tenant

HOME SWEET HOME

Tenants have moved into their lovely new homes across the country.



LANCASHIRE



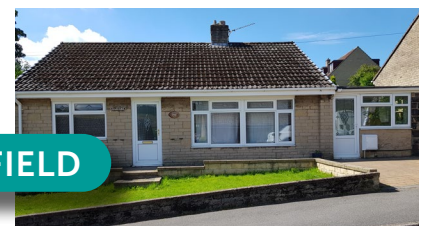
DERBYSHIRE



LEICESTERSHIRE



WEST MIDLANDS



SHEFFIELD



WORCESTERSHIRE



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



INCOME AND SPEND

Last year our turnover was £11.1 million. Overall turnover is lower than the year before by £0.5 million. This has been driven by a reduction in income following the divestment of 54 mainly void long-lease units as we focused on improving occupancy for operational schemes. We are pleased to report that 28 new properties were brought in to use this year, that make a contribution to Encircle Housing's overhead and operational costs.

IMPROVING FINANCES

We have continued to improve the management of our finances and controls by further developing inhouse reporting and management information and key performance indicators. Following the year end, as we seek to strengthen as an organisation, we have brought our Finance Team fully in-house and have migrated to a new ICT support provider. We continue to develop our use of management information to identify areas of

risk and effectively use our resources to resolve any issues.

The combination of our excellent financial reporting, driving up occupancy and tenant satisfaction has overall contributed to an improved financial outcome and liquidity position against the previous year.

RENT	MARCH 2022	MARCH 2021	MARCH 2020
Full Housing Benefit	75%*	82%	85%
Partial payment	4%	3%	4%
Self-funding	14%	8%	9%
New claims/inactive/suspended	4%	7%	2%

*As of September 2023, Housing benefit payment increased to 87%. There has been greater scrutiny by Housing Benefit departments following updated advice by Department of Work and Pensions that resulted in delays with rent uplifts across the supported housing sector. This has been a challenging time for Encircle Housing, and we continued to manage the cash flow within our current reserves.

RENTAL INCOME

MARCH 2023
£8,074,740

MARCH 2022 £8,411,092

MARCH 2021 £7,006,787



OCCUPANCY



83% IN 2023



86% IN 2022

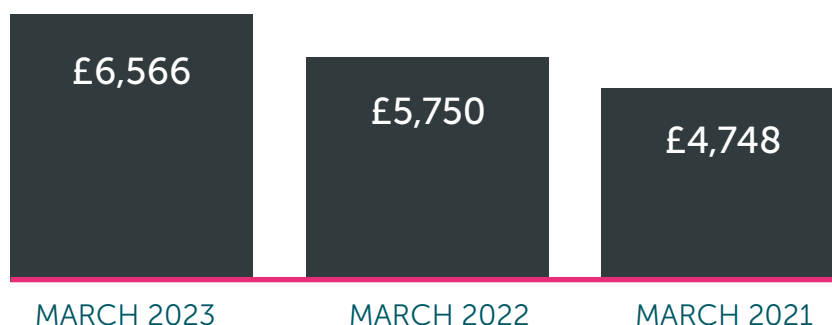


74% IN 2021

*As of September 2023, occupancy had returned to nearly 86%.

SOCIAL HOUSING COST PER UNIT

(EXCLUDING LEASE RENT)



FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

We are continually assessing the risks to the organisation that could impact our performance and sustainability. For external validation of our performance, we have our annual statutory audit as well as undertaking an intensive internal audit program across all areas of the business on a cyclical program with a third-party provider of internal audit services. The Management Team and Board undertake reviews of all areas of the business. This includes operational reviews of support services within the business as well as the creation of roadmaps for recovery or exit of underperforming assets. A comprehensive Board reporting program exists to ensure our financial responsibilities are met.



VALUE FOR MONEY



We always want to provide value for money and make best use of our resources and services delivered to our tenants and across our organisation.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022/23

- £10,300 saved as we carried out the damp proofing, installed skirting boards and laid flooring
- £4,570 saved as repairs and maintenance work to tenants' homes were completed in-house
- We changed the security locks at a property with a saving of £1,400
- Painting works were carried out to our tenants homes with a saving of £3,850
- £4,600 saved on external works to our properties including fencing, installation of a path, removal of a BBQ and replacing guttering
- £10,000 saving on boiler servicing following tendering and contract renewal
- £480 contribution from one of our contractors Revival Contractors for a garden makeover and a day's labour for two operatives
- £1,000 saved as in-house surveyor carried out Fire Risk Assessments

MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

- We are improving our housing management system software for recording and monitoring purposes
- We changed our ICT service provider in May 2023 to ensure best value for money
- We changed our mobile phone provider and obtained the best tariff and contract
- We are bringing finance, HR and payroll services inhouse in 2023/24 to deliver value for money savings
- We will continue to tender services as renewals become due and new services are implemented to ensure best value for money





"Our partnership with Encircle Housing has enabled us to bring our specialist knowledge together,"

said Jenny



JENNY FROM IBC HEALTHCARE

iBC Healthcare realise that the majority reason for people with high acuity care needs residing in hospital and secure settings for long periods of time, often well past being deemed suitable for discharge, is lack of suitable housing in the community. iBC Healthcare's mission is to offer bespoke accommodation with the right level of support to enable people to live in their own homes and communities, no matter how complex their needs may be. This has become a successful reality for many people across the country now, through the partnership work between iBC Healthcare and Encircle Housing.

"We believe people should have a choice to live independently in their community, free from unnecessary hospitalisation, and that's our aim," said Jenny Payne, Commercial Director at iBC Healthcare. "We want to ensure a person-centred approach to all support needs and that the people we support have the freedom to explore their wishes, goals and interests in a safe and bespoke environment.

We truly believe that designing the right environment is half the battle in offering the best possible opportunities in the community, to people with complex care and support needs. This, combined with the incredible work from our operational teams; enables us to help people achieve incredible outcomes far beyond expectations.

In line with these aims and values, we set out to find a reputable registered provider to act as a landlord to iBC's growing portfolio of properties. We approached Encircle Housing and have been really pleased with the partnership since; working in collaboration with the people we support at the very centre of everything we do.

Encircle Housing utilise their expertise to manage properties, tenancies and much more. This enables us to focus our specialism in offering high quality support, with confidence that the housing responsibilities are well taken care of, from property compliance to family communication. Working with Encircle Housing has provided significant insight and learning to our internal teams. By utilising Encircle Housing's expertise in Housing Benefit, this has helped the people we support to apply and receive their rent entitlements, thus making positive outcomes possible, in people's own homes."

Read Jenny's full story, go to www.encircleha.co.uk/about-us/



HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022/23

- We worked closely with tenants and local authorities about the rent increase and to answer any questions. 99% of the rent increase amounts have been received
- Our new Rent Arrears Management System went live in 2022/23
- 83 of our tenants are making automated payments for their rent
- We set a target to write off no more than 1% of annual tenant rental income. We achieved this target in the first year with 0.99%
- During Money Matters Week we helped tenants gain a greater understanding about managing their finances and household bills and shared information
- We have submitted Housing Benefit claims on behalf of 108 tenants

MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

- We are introducing an automated system for utility payments as it gives our tenants more ways to pay and helps us to be more efficient
- We are creating a Housing Application form that includes a digital income and expenditure section

Help us to help you

If you have got any concerns about your rent, experiencing difficulties in payments or your circumstances change including moving out, get in touch with our Rent Income Team. Call 0330 390 0517 or email contactus@encircleha.co.uk

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Tenants have been given information about energy efficiency in their newsletter, Our Voice and a new factsheet on our website
- We undertook a tender process for the best possible energy tariffs for our tenants' homes to ensure our tenants are receiving the best value for money
- We worked together with our tenants to apply for the government's Energy Grant where applicable which has reduced the amount to pay on their utility bill
- 80% of our tenant's homes now have smart meters installed

YOU SAID...

...WE DID

YOU SAID:

You would like advice about keeping bills down.

WE DID:

We produced energy saving tips in Our Voice newsletter, supported tenants to apply for the government grant entitlements for utility bills and got the best tariffs for bills with service providers.

OUR PLANS FOR 2024

Looking ahead, we want to continue making a positive difference to the lives our tenants and across the specialised supported housing sector. At the forefront is improving our services further with the help of our tenants, raising our standards, our learning and development programme, and housing more tenants through our partnership work.

Our tenants' views from the recent survey are being used to shape some of the services across the organisation. We have already begun planning how we can implement some of the changes.

Over the next 12 months, we will be strengthening our partnership work with care providers and commissioners to mainly provide supported living housing for people with a learning disability and sensory impairments.

We welcome the Social Housing Regulatory Act 2023 that will apply to all registered landlords from 1 April 2024. This will improve the regulation of social housing, strengthen tenants' rights and ensure better quality and safer homes. We are working with other specialist housing providers to develop a professionals' forum where questions and concerns about the changes can be addressed.

Being a small housing provider brings challenges of its own. We strive to deliver the best service that we can with the limited resources compared to the larger housing providers. Most of our operational services are now provided inhouse

which gives us greater control over the quality of services we can deliver to our tenants.

Importantly, we want to empower our employee's growth and give them opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and capabilities. Recently we launched a new monthly learning and development programme to support them in their roles, and their health and wellbeing.

Every year we raise our standards further. Our first internal Painting Programme launched in late autumn. We wanted to offer tenants the choice of modern hard-wearing paint that would continue to look fresh. A lasting paint would also reduce the frequency of repainting work and minimise disruption to our tenants' lives.

By working alongside a major paint manufacturer, we developed a robust durable paint in a variety of colours for the walls and a feature wall. Large colour sheets were created so tenants can easily select the colour scheme for each of their communal areas. We kindly ask that our tenants wait until we contact them, we are getting in touch three months in advance of their home being decorated.

We are looking forward to working alongside our tenants and partners and bringing you our updates throughout the next year.





CONTACT US

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

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contactus@encircleha.co.uk

REPAIRS

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repairs@encircleha.co.uk

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Leeds, LS19 7PP

Registered Provider of Social Housing number 4784
and Co-operative and Community Benefit Society
Financial Conduct Authority Number 8071. Encircle
Housing has charitable rules.