



herefordshire housing

>People >Homes >Communities



Involving  
Improving  
Inspiring

Annual Report - 2015/16





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For more information  
contact us on 0300 777 4321





## Introduction

### This is my first report as chair of Herefordshire Housing Group.

The organisation has changed so much over the last few years that we are unrecognisable from the stock transfer of 2002. Our working environment is changing rapidly so it is critical that we evolve and adapt to maintain our effectiveness. It has been exciting to see how we are now reaching out to even

more people; supporting them and contributing to positive changes in their lives. My goal is to make sure this continues and over the coming years. I want to see us step up to a new level; providing a wider range of services and creating more opportunities for those who need them.

At the start of the financial year the Independence Trust, a charity with a long and successful track record of supporting people with mental health and substance misuse problems, joined us so that together we can help more people. The national policy

of continued austerity makes us all look hard into the core of how we provide services. Benefit cuts impoverish our customers, sanctions on welfare benefits are punitive and most of the time, difficult to understand. We can help by offering a home, help to get a job and support to make lifestyle changes. Herefordshire will always be our base but now we are providing direct services in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Shropshire.

None of this can be achieved without a strong financial foundation. November saw a significant improvement

to our finances. Moving quickly to take advantage of specific financial conditions, we replaced unattractive historic funding with a new capital bond from the financial markets. For a time, this was the best deal that had ever been achieved for a housing association. A £120m bond was created and £85m accessed to repay the existing loan and fund the building of new homes in Herefordshire. The redevelopment of The Oval will soon reach the half way point but we have now added new developments in villages and towns across

the county. Much needed homes for the people of Herefordshire.

Our success is no accident. Central to this report is our drive to involve our people in decision taking, constantly looking to improve value for money and inspiring customers and colleagues to reach out and make a difference. We cannot do this without your help. If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve, let us know. Thank you •



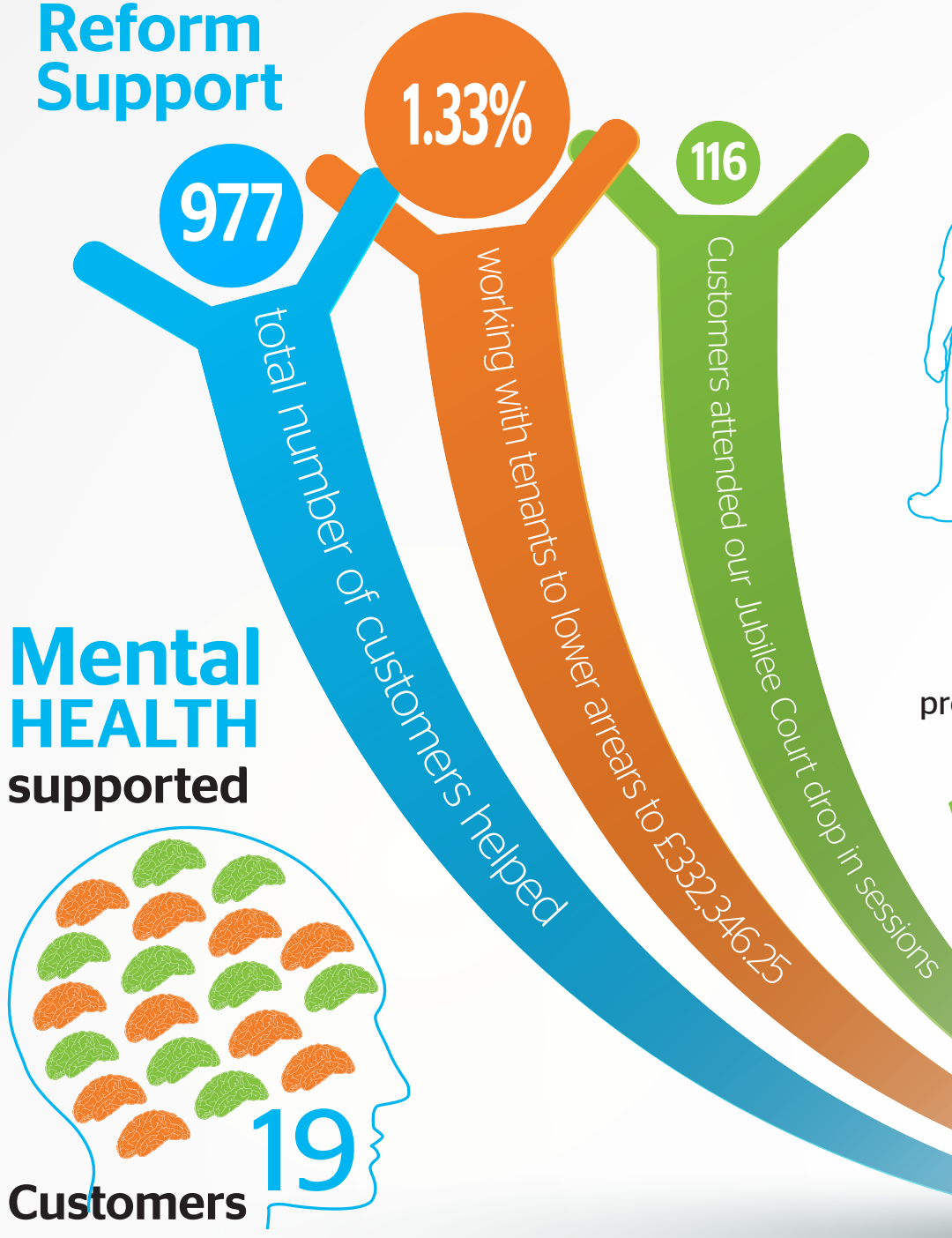
**Ruth Cooke**  
Chair



Our Customers

**Recommend to a friend**  
**85.4%** of our customers gave us a rating of between  
👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍 **7/10**  
👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍 **10/10**  
when thinking about recommending us to a friend

**Welfare Reform Support**



**Mental HEALTH supported**



**Connect**

 <b>97.4%</b> satisfied with the service	 <b>79,704</b> calls received
 <b>85.6%</b> calls resolved at first contact	 <b>14.2</b> average waiting time in seconds



**Complaints received**

**Careline**  
calls received





## Involving

## Welfare Reform Support

As Government Welfare Reform continues to challenge our customers and with the introduction of Universal Credit into Herefordshire, this year has been a busy time for our Financial Inclusion Officers. Our teams have been working tirelessly to ensure that our customers understand what all of the changes mean for them and their families.

Since April 2014 the team have helped **977** customers with lots of advice including; the bedroom tax, budgeting and accessing grant funding. In addition, the team have helped another **116** customers who attended drop in sessions at Jubilee Court, Hereford. The team also successfully sourced an additional **£700,000** in benefits to support our customers, including; £73,000 Discretionary Housing Payments, £436,000 in Housing Benefit, £174,000 other benefits and £3,000 in Warm Homes Discounts •

## Careline

Our Careline service continues to be a strong asset for the Herefordshire Housing Group and we currently provide **27,520** connections across the country, with the team having handled **318,090** calls this year. The number of connections has dropped this

year due to several contracts ending, however we are addressing this and exploring new opportunities. As well as growing our alarm service, we have developed a new service for our existing Careline customers called Mobile Responder. The service was launched earlier this year, but is still in its infancy •

## Job Club

At our job club we aim to inspire our customers to gain the confidence and skills to enable them to get back into work. The club, run by our Social Development Team, has had **6,018** visits and we've helped **265** people secure employment •

## Homeless Prevention Support

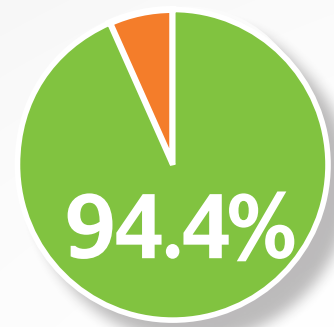
This year sees us come to the end of our contract to deliver homeless prevention support on behalf of Herefordshire Council. The service has provided support, information, advice and guidance to individuals, couples and families who were threatened with a homeless situation within Herefordshire. This year we received a total of **359** referrals, helped **52** clients remain in their homes, **22** clients secure suitable private rented properties and **57** clients gain a social tenancy with a housing provider •



Our Homes

# Aids and Adaptations

£125,000 spent on adapting your homes

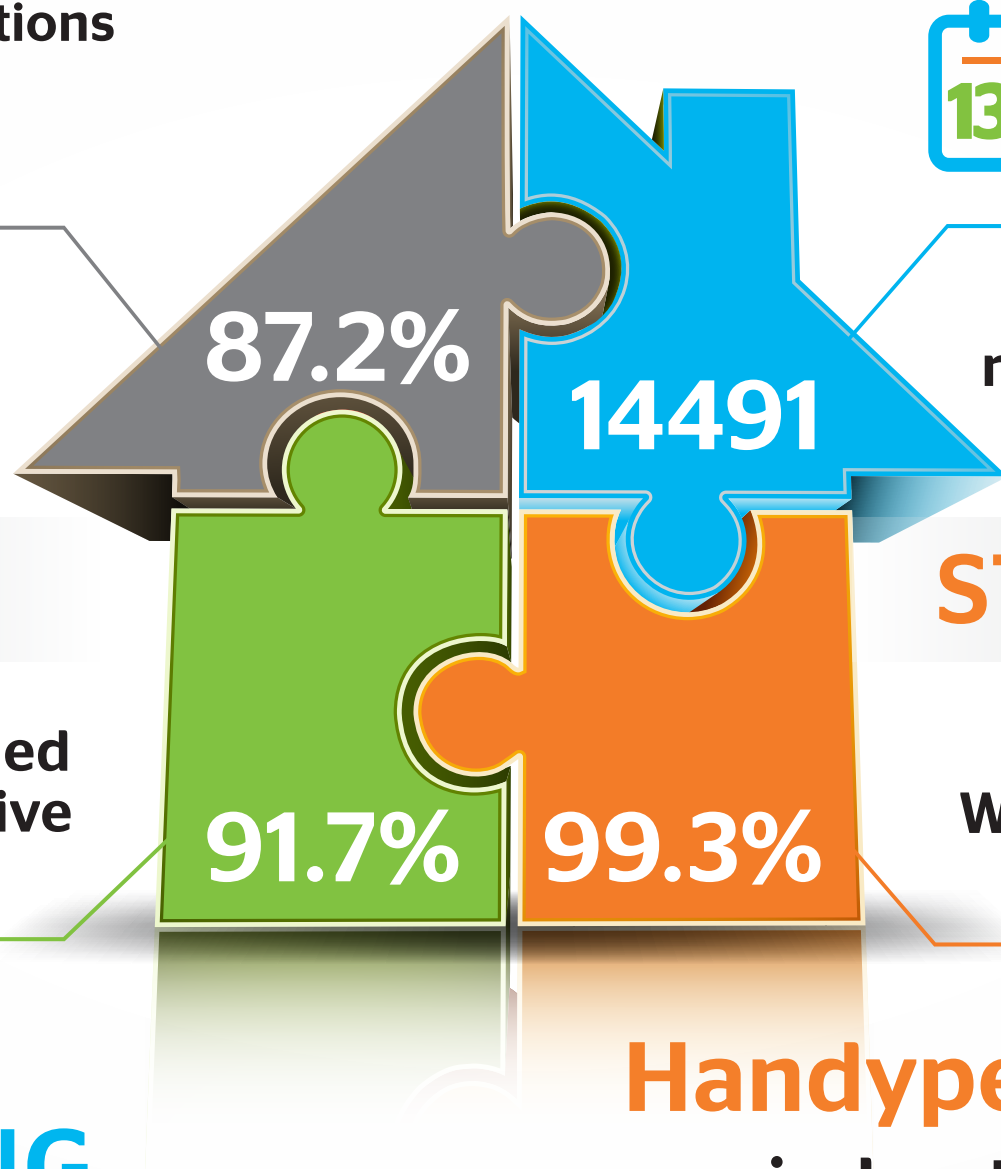


satisfied with our aids and adaptations service

Responsive repairs fixed at first visit

## REPAIR

Customers satisfied with our responsive repair service



Total number of responsive repairs

## STATISTICS

Work completed on time

# Void property turn around



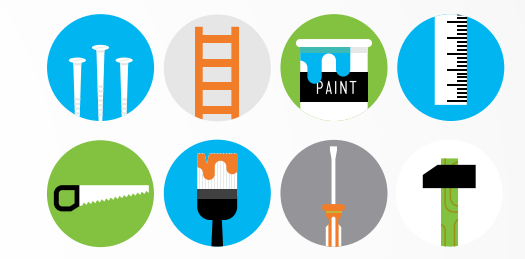
13.9 DAYS

# Energy Efficiency Total Spend

£3,467,000



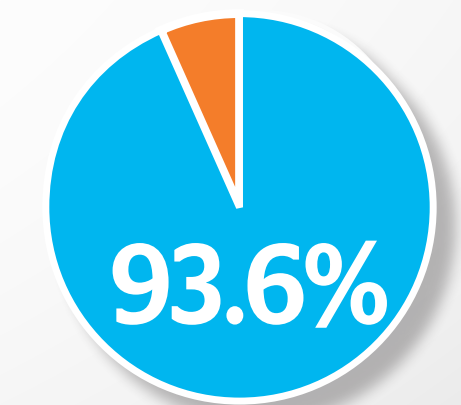
# HOME IMPROVEMENT



# TEAM

# TOTAL SPEND

£7,156,887



of customers were satisfied with our improvements service

# GAS SERVICING

4507 appointments made

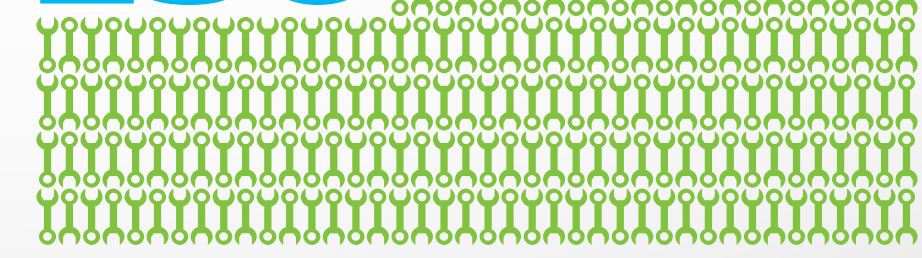
99.96% appointments kept

94.1% satisfied with the service

# Handyperson+

carried out

230



JOBS





herefordshire housing

# The Oval Regeneration - Building a Community

MARCH 2009

AUGUST 2017

## The Oval Regeneration - Building a Community

Herefordshire Housing is committed to building a brighter future by providing Herefordshire with quality homes for our current and future residents.

The Oval Regeneration project is part of our commitment to invest in our communities.

Government Grant

£3.2m

Herefordshire Housing

£14m

House Sales

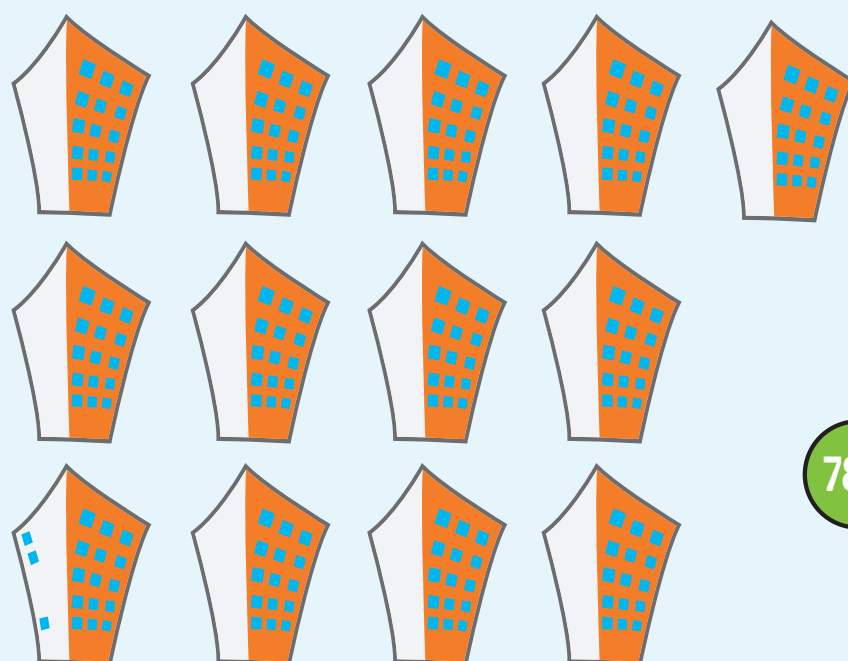
£18m

Herefordshire Council

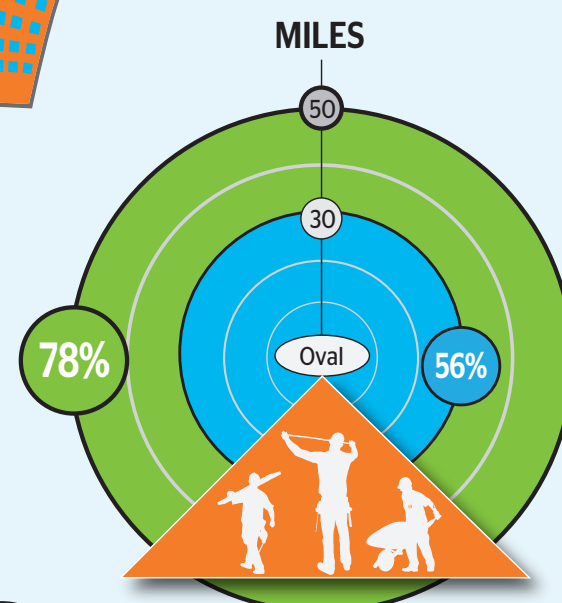
EXTRA LAND

198 FLATS

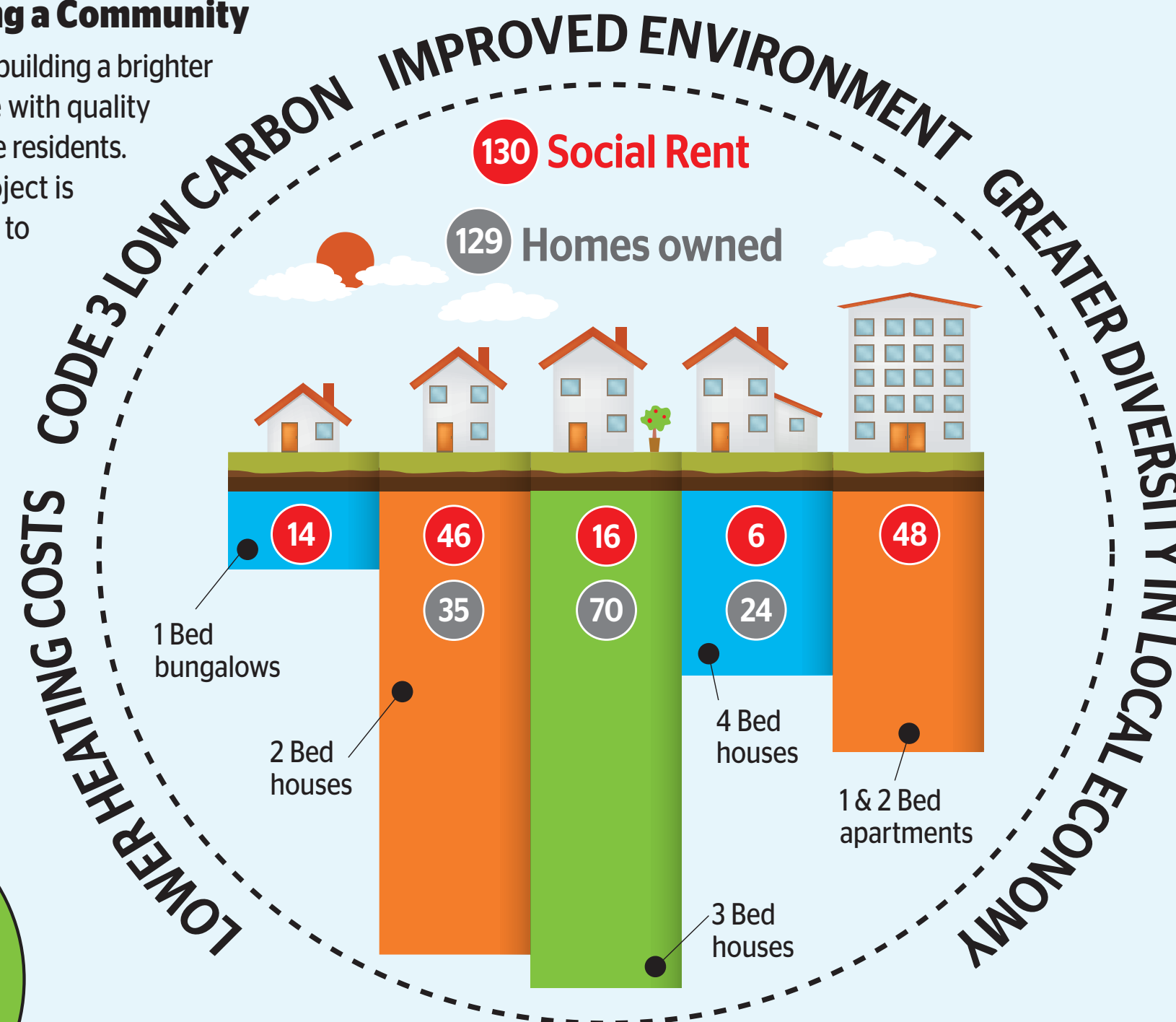
13 BLOCKS



# DEMOLISHED



Distance builders work within miles of the Oval



7 Apprentices



1 Outdoor Gym



## Improving

### The Oval Regeneration Project - Building a community

This is our biggest regeneration project to date, and after many years of work we are proud to announce that the first new homes are now complete. These properties have now become homes to our tenants, with the first just in time for Christmas. So far we have completed **27** homes and are near completion on our new flats - Gilbert Court •

### Adapting your homes

We aim to, where possible, ensure that our customers can live independently in their homes by supporting and providing adaptations that suit their needs. This year we have spent **£125,000** adapting our customers' homes •

### Energy Efficient Homes

Ensuring that our homes are warm and cost effective for our customers to run is a key consideration for us. This year we have invested **£3,467,000** in energy efficiency works. This includes new windows, loft and external wall insulation, installing storage heaters and gas condensing boilers. Over the next five years we will be investing **£18 million** into the improvement programme budget to improve the energy efficiency of our homes •



Our Communities

# Support for Families Programme



Funded by DWP, European funding

335

customers on the programme

261

customers supported for

10 weeks plus

# Rate Your Place

We've surveyed 4 of our communities:  
Rural North, Hunderton, Ross Road, College

All rated their areas as:



rated their neighbourhood as either Silver or Gold for Safety

  
**Community Grant Fund**  
**£16,075**  
given to community groups

**ASB** **94**  
ASB incidents were reported  
1 2 3 4 5  
6 7 8 9  
cases were taken to court

Every **£1**  
we invested it generated  
**£25.05**  
in social value  
**Total social value**  
**£4,488,770**

## Social Value

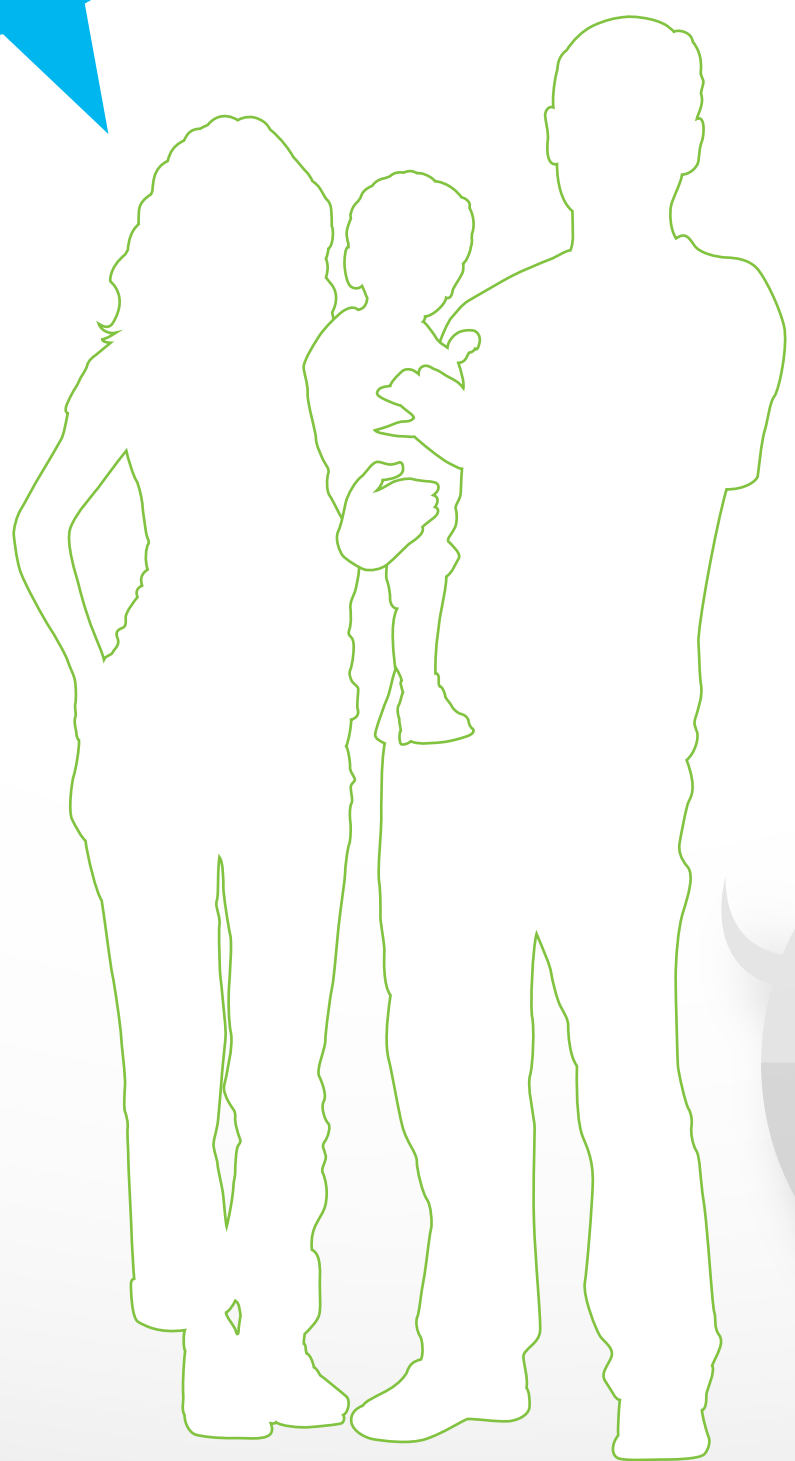
## Digital Inclusion

**144**   
people attended our IT and Ancestry courses

## Value for money savings



In total we saved  
**£1,286,268.24**





## Inspiring

### Getting the best value

By making sure that our services deliver value for money it means we are able to invest in our communities. Through our value for money savings campaign colleagues saved an amazing **£100,000** which was dedicated to several projects. Through consultation and

involving our customers we identified several play areas that needed updating; Mayberry Avenue and Haylease Crescent. Alongside updating these two play areas, we also built a brand new one at Ross Road, created a project to help offenders re-integrate back into the community and renewed plants and shrubbery in Turner Street and St Owens Place •

### Making our investments go further

Social value is very important to us, as we want to ensure that any activities we undertake benefit our wider communities and increase individual wellbeing. This year for every £1 we spent, it produced **£25.05** of social value and created a total of **£4,488,770** across our communities •

## Respectful and Caring Communities

We are committed to creating respectful and caring communities and our Neighbourhood Action Team work hard to make sure this happens. Our focus is on early intervention and prevention as a way of ensuring that repeat Anti-Social Behaviour doesn't take place. This year we have had **94** reported incidents of ASB, with the majority focused upon noise, verbal abuse, intimidation and drug misuse.

Where cases are deemed to be serious or individuals have persisted to cause a disturbance we have taken people to court. This year **9** cases have been taken to court, all resulted in either an outright possession or suspended possession order. Out of the remaining **85** cases, **4** agreed to work with us to address their ASB issues, **1** person surrendered their tenancy prior to court proceedings and **80** were dealt with through early intervention •

## Improving the lives of families - The Horizon Programme

We are proud to announce that we have successfully secured a **£16,000** grant from the Police Crime Commissioners to run a pilot project called The Horizon Programme. The programme seeks to work with male perpetrators of domestic abuse to increase the safety

of women and children. The pilot aims to encourage male abusers to take responsibility for their actions, change behaviour, whilst developing respectful and non-abusive relationships. It is hoped that this pilot will establish a delivery model that can be used as part of a longer term programme in Herefordshire and the surrounding counties.

The Horizon Programme is being run in partnership with West Mercia Women's Aid, Hereford Community Safety Partnership and West Mercia Police •

## Rate your place

We are committed to creating communities where our tenants feel safe, inspired and want to contribute to. This year we have been asking some of our communities to "Rate your place". This postal survey asks questions about cleanliness, safety and tidiness in order to gauge a better understanding of our communities and any issues they may have. The feedback we have received will be used to plan improvements to areas that our customers have identified as needing it most. This year we have surveyed Hunderton, Ross Road, College and Rural North •

## Helping our communities - Community Grant Funding

Our Community Grant Fund aims to help community groups to deliver projects, events or run activities that would benefit and improve the lives of our tenants and the wider community. We have been actively inviting community groups and individuals across the county to apply for up to £2000 to benefit their communities. This year we approved several community projects with **£16,075** going back to community groups. The projects we have helped this year were wide ranging from crafters groups, community clubs and a local project to transform the playing fields in Clehonger, pictured below •





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