

AUTUMN 2012

Contact

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL TENANTS



Annual Report 2012/13

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**Mansfield
District Council**

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WELCOME

Welcome to Mansfield District Council's Annual Report for Tenants which gives you information about how we performed as your landlord during 2011/2012.

Foreword



Cllr Mick Colley
Portfolio Holder for
Tenancy Services and
Housing Needs



Joe Bonser
Chair of the Housing
Services Panel

This report ensures that our tenants are kept up-to-date on the services we provide and shows how we are performing against the standards of service we have previously set. This year we have met many of our service targets and have recognised areas where we need to improve. We could not have done this without our Housing Services Panel, which has held us to account, helped us to recognise where we need to improve and prompted us to take action when our services have fallen below the agreed standards. I would like to thank the panel and the tenants that have taken the time to provide us with their feedback (both good and bad). I would also like to thank the Housing staff at the Council for their hard work and support over the past year. By listening and taking your comments into account we can continue to make improvements and strive towards delivering excellent services.

I feel that this report is an honest account of how Mansfield District Council has performed over the past year and highlights successes as well as what needs improving. I am pleased that the Council has taken our feedback into account and has planned a number of improvements for 2012/2013. The report is a testament to the way the Council listens and is prepared to act upon your views. I hope you will take the time to read this report and make the most of opportunities to provide your feedback. As a panel, we will continue to work on your behalf to ensure that the Council continues to take your views into account when delivering its services.



YOUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

In 2011, 79% of you said that your neighbourhood was a decent and safe place to live.

WHAT YOU SAID



The main issues you were worried about in your neighbourhoods were:

- ➔ Rubbish and litter
- ➔ Car parking, and
- ➔ Noisy neighbours.



WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We carried out regular walkabouts around our estates
- ➔ We developed preventative measures that helped reduce problem parking on our estates
- ➔ We disposed of several garage sites to improve the appearance of specific neighbourhoods, and
- ➔ We took part in joint action days with the Police and other agencies to resolve neighbourhood based issues.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ We gave our Tenants and Residents' groups £7,389 to make improvements to their neighbourhoods, and
- ➔ We have committed £30,000 over the next four years to improving the living environment in our housing estates.

OUR PLEDGE



We will improve the living environment in and around our estates and neighbourhoods by:

- ➔ Developing area profiles to identify the priorities for each of our neighbourhoods
- ➔ Working with other agencies such as the Police to improve your neighbourhoods, and
- ➔ Disposing of garage sites that are causing anti-social behaviour (ASB) related problems in specific neighbourhoods.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

In 2011/2012 91% of 254 new ASB cases reported by our tenants were resolved. Over 54% of tenants were satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with.

WHAT YOU SAID



In order to tackle ASB more effectively, you wanted us to:

- Respond quickly and effectively to ASB
- Provide more support for victims of ASB, and
- Keep victims of ASB updated on what is happening with their case.



WHAT WE DID



- We improved the way we dealt with ASB by focusing on supporting the victim
- We provided ASB training for our staff and introduced a new way of recording and monitoring cases, and
- We signed up to the RESPECT charter, which sets out national standards and expectations when preventing and dealing with ASB. We used this as a framework to develop and improve our ASB service.

DID YOU KNOW?



- Mansfield Partnership Against Crime (MPAC) focuses its work on targeted geographical areas, which are classed as Partnership Plus areas
- Mansfield's Partnership Plus areas are Carr Bank, Newgate, Oak Tree, Portland, Woodlands and parts of the town centre
- MPAC ensures that high visibility patrols are carried out by the Police and Neighbourhood Wardens at key times, and
- An improvement group made up of Council officers and tenant representatives was set up to help us improve the way in which we deal with reports of ASB.

OUR PLEDGE



We will work in partnership with other agencies to deliver a range of prevention, intervention and enforcement measures to ensure your neighbourhoods are safe and sustainable.

YOUR PROPERTY

We achieved the Decent Homes standard and target set by the Government on all of our properties. As a result, 81% of our tenants stated that they were satisfied with the condition of their property.

WHAT YOU SAID



In order to make your homes a better place to live, you wanted:

- ➔ To choose the location of new boilers in your properties, and
- ➔ The Council to help you reduce the cost of District heating.



WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We completed improvement work on 764 bathrooms at an average cost of £1,481 per property
- ➔ We completed work on 104 kitchens at an average cost of £3,000 per property
- ➔ We developed a maintenance programme to renew 153 fascias at an average cost of £2,336 per property and 451 doors at an average cost of £750 per property
- ➔ We converted the coal fired District heating systems in 54 properties on New England Way to energy efficient renewable energy systems
- ➔ We ensured that tenants were happy with the locations of their new boilers, and
- ➔ We began a programme to convert the coal fired District heating systems in 1,100 properties on the Oak Tree Lane estate to energy efficient gas central heating systems.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ Tenants who completed a satisfaction survey expressed high levels of satisfaction with the bathroom improvement programme
- ➔ 95% of tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service they received, and
- ➔ 93% were happy with the quality of work.

OUR PLEDGE



We will ensure that our homes meet your standards by:

- ➔ Investing in energy efficient heating technology
- ➔ Investing £16m on improvements to our properties over a four year period, and
- ➔ Rolling out the District heating replacement programme to all of our properties.

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

In 2011/2012 we completed 22,955 repairs on properties across the District at an average cost of £606 per property. Over 95% of tenants said that they were very satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service they had received.

WHAT YOU SAID



To make our Housing Repairs service more efficient, you wanted:

- ➔ Repairs to be completed quicker
- ➔ More specific appointment times
- ➔ Clearer information on your repairing responsibilities as a tenant
- ➔ Compensation if we don't turn up when we say we will
- ➔ To be informed when a member of the Housing Repairs team is on their way to complete the repair, and
- ➔ The repair completing at the first visit.

Performance Measure	Target	Performance 2011/2012
Average time taken to complete a non-urgent repair	10 days	21 days
% of all urgent repairs completed within the set timescale	97%	91%
% of appointments made and kept	99%	93%
% of repairs completed right first time	85%	67%
Average length of time to complete an adaptation (under £1,000)	20 days	14 days

WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We reviewed and introduced a range of performance measures and service standards for our Housing Repairs service
- ➔ We trained all our Housing staff to be multi-skilled
- ➔ We provided more specific appointment times, and
- ➔ We ensured stock was carried by all Housing Repairs staff to make sure that the repair is completed at the first visit.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ We completed 99.67% of all annual gas service checks in our properties and 98% of those that had a gas safety check were satisfied with the service they received.

OUR PLEDGE



We will provide an effective and efficient repairs and maintenance service that meets our tenants' needs and expectations.

ALLOCATING OUR VACANT PROPERTIES

During 2011/2012 we let 634 properties and took an average time of 29 days to re-let each property.

The longer our properties are left empty, the more we lose in rental income which could be reinvested in your homes.

We therefore aim to carry on reducing the length of time it takes to let our empty homes.

WHAT YOU SAID



- ➔ The majority of you were satisfied with our letting service
- ➔ 97% of you were satisfied with the allocation and letting process, and
- ➔ 94% of you were satisfied with the condition of the property when we let it.

WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We introduced Homefinder, which is a sub-regional Choice Based Letting (CBL) scheme, in January 2012 to replace our existing CBL scheme
- ➔ We reviewed our Allocations Policy to ensure that those in greatest need are given priority for re-housing
- ➔ We reviewed our waiting list
- ➔ We signed up to a national housing exchange service (Homeswapper) which offers more choice to people wishing to move house, and
- ➔ We re-housed 35 tenants through our MARS scheme (Mansfield Associates Rented Solutions) which works with landlords in the private sector to provide good quality rented properties.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ In 2012 we owned 6,661 properties and built 44 new properties
- ➔ There are currently 4,402 people on the Homefinder re-housing register
- ➔ 14% of people currently on the register are classed as needing priority re-housing, and
- ➔ 89% of applicants were satisfied with our re-housing process.

OUR PLEDGE



We will continue to support people who are in need of housing by:

- ➔ Making the best use of our housing stock by reducing overcrowding, tackling under-occupation and adapting housing for those with a disability
- ➔ Providing support to tenants to help them sustain their tenancies, and
- ➔ Supporting the development of new homes and sustainable communities across the District.

YOUR TENANCY

In 2011/2012 we collected 99% of all rent that was owed to us, however this still left a shortfall of 1%, which amounted to £418,416.23.

The money we get from renting our properties is used to pay for the management and maintenance of your homes and neighbourhoods. It is therefore important that we collect all the rent due to us.

WHAT YOU SAID



- ➔ 83% of you were satisfied that your rent provided good value for money.

WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We consulted all our tenants to find out what they thought about our rent collection and support services
- ➔ We carried out a campaign to help tenants meet their rent payments
- ➔ We promoted our tenancy support, money advice and welfare rights services, and
- ➔ We made it easier for you to pay your rent by Direct Debit.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ Last year, 74 tenants were evicted for not paying their rent
- ➔ We served 717 repossession notices to tenants who were in arrears with their rent payments
- ➔ Our Money Advisor helped 144 tenants and our Welfare Rights Advisor helped 134 tenants, and
- ➔ 97% of tenants who received tenancy support sustained their tenancies.

OUR PLEDGE



We will make the best use of our housing stock and provide effective services to help people sustain their tenancies by:

- ➔ Developing a Tenancy Policy which sets out the type of tenancies we will offer
- ➔ Developing our Rent Charging Policy which determines our rent charges
- ➔ Developing our approach to tenancy fraud and tenancy sustainment
- ➔ Improving the time it takes to re-let an empty property
- ➔ Developing options for tenants who are affected by under occupancy and other welfare benefit changes, and
- ➔ Developing a Financial Inclusion Strategy which clearly sets out how we can help and support our tenants.

In 2011/2012 we collected

99%

of all rent that was owed to us, however this still left a shortfall of 1%, which amounted to £418,416.23.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

We are committed to providing services that our tenants want at a standard that has been agreed by them.

There are a variety of ways in which you can have your say including:

- ➔ Customer satisfaction surveys
- ➔ Comments and compliment cards
- ➔ Complaints procedure
- ➔ Tenants and Residents' groups, and
- ➔ Mystery shops.

WHAT YOU SAID



- ➔ You wanted us to respond quicker to complaints and keep you informed of our progress
- ➔ 68% of you thought that it was easy to make a complaint, and
- ➔ 55% of you were satisfied with the information and advice provided by staff when they made a complaint.

WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We produced our revised customer service standards
- ➔ We set up an improvement group to look at how we capture and use customer feedback, and
- ➔ We carried out mystery shops to test our customer service.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ In 2011/2012 we received 74 official complaints and 70% of these were resolved within the agreed timescales.

OUR PLEDGE



We will provide excellent customer service by:

- ➔ Raising staff awareness and training on all aspects of customer care
- ➔ Reviewing the way in which we capture and use your feedback to make improvements to our services
- ➔ Telling you how we have used your feedback to improve services
- ➔ Developing a more comprehensive set of customer service measures, and
- ➔ Working towards Customer Service Excellence accreditation.

In 2011/2012 we received 74 official complaints

70% *of these were resolved within the agreed timescales.*

TENANT INVOLVEMENT

The aim of tenant involvement is to help the Council understand the needs, expectations, aspirations, achievements and experiences of our tenants so we can improve our services.

To ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to be involved in our decisions we offer different levels of involvement. These can range from purely receiving information to making decisions about our services.

WHAT YOU SAID



- ➔ 62% of you were satisfied that we listen to your views and take them into account, and
- ➔ Only 22% of you knew how to challenge the service you receive from us.

The different levels of involvement are:

➔ Empowerment

We delegate various aspects of housing management to tenants.

➔ Involvement

We encourage tenants to voice their ideas and opinions and provide opportunities for joint decision-making and scrutiny.

➔ Consultation

We listen to tenants' feedback and may change proposals as a result of their views.

➔ Information

We let tenants know what will be happening, how it meets the agreed standards and how it will improve.



WHAT WE DID



- ➔ We developed a new scrutiny schedule and Tenant Involvement Strategy aimed at identifying and improving the way in which you can become involved in shaping and delivering our services
- ➔ We set up two new tenant improvement groups which look at income management and customer feedback
- ➔ We recruited four more tenants as mystery shoppers
- ➔ We set up two new Tenants and Residents' groups
- ➔ We recruited and trained a panel of service inspectors
- ➔ We set up a stakeholder group within one of our regeneration areas, and
- ➔ We supported the Mansfield Volunteer awards.

DID YOU KNOW?



- ➔ In 2011 we spent an average of £44 per property supporting tenant involvement activities
- ➔ There are four housing improvement groups which are made up of tenant representatives. The improvement groups are Responsive Repairs and Property Improvement, Income Management, Customer Feedback and Anti-Social Behaviour
- ➔ There are currently six mystery shoppers and service inspectors, and
- ➔ We currently support 12 Tenants and Residents' groups.

OUR PLEDGE



We will ensure that all of our tenants have the opportunity and choice to become involved by:

- ➔ Promoting tenant involvement and scrutiny opportunities
- ➔ Putting involvement structures in place that represent the wider views of tenants
- ➔ Recruiting more service inspectors and mystery shoppers, and
- ➔ Developing opportunities for armchair scrutiny, where tenants can give their feedback from the comfort of their own homes.

62% *of you were satisfied that we listen to your views and take them into account.*

GET IN TOUCH

- ➔ Mansfield North Housing Office (Civic Centre) **01623 463 129**
- ➔ Housing Repairs Contact Centre **01623 463 500**
- ➔ 24-hour Emergency contact (repairs) **01623 463 050**
- ➔ Ashfield and Mansfield Homefinder **01623 463 402**
- ➔ Central Control **01623 463 341**
- ➔ Housing Advice Service **01623 463 125**
- ➔ Money Advice Service **01623 463 451**
- ➔ Welfare Rights Service **01623 463 450**
- ➔ Right to Buy/Leaseholders Officer **01623 463 062**
- ➔ Tenant Involvement Officers **01623 463 273 / 463 147**



Meeting your needs

We can provide this information in larger print, in Braille, on audio tape, on CD or in another language. Contact: **01623 463 463**
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