

# Plymouth Community Homes Annual Report 2016-2017

Plymouth  
Community Homes





# Welcome from Elaine

I have been looking back over the past year, and it has certainly been a busy one. We have continued to work together to deliver on the ambition to deliver great services at a fair price whilst providing new homes for the people of Plymouth. This makes me proud of what we do.

As we start to deliver on the new plans we set out in April 2017, we recognise that we are here to help people who are in need of affordable homes and to provide support for residents who are finding it hard as Welfare Reform and other factors are leaving many people with less money in their pockets.

As I think about our biggest achievements over the last year, the one that comes to mind is a stock transfer of 92 homes from Stonewater Housing Association. This was an important “first” for us because it means we can grow our business by having more homes for rent whilst welcoming more people into the PCH family.

Growing the organisation is a key focus for us over the coming years, and in order to achieve that we strengthened our financial position by re-financing our loans. This will give us much more capacity to build additional homes for rent and shared-ownership in and around Plymouth.

Out and about in our neighbourhoods, we have spent time with residents drawing up Neighbourhood Plans which contain specific targets that you want us to meet in each area. We also launched a refurbishment programme which concentrates on bringing blocks of flats up to a high standard – last year we transformed two blocks in Stonehouse and residents have told us that they are delighted.

You can read more about our achievements and how we have performed throughout this booklet. We are also sharing our plans for the future with you so you know what to expect from us over the coming years. I hope you enjoy the read.

**Elaine Pellow - Chair of the Board**



# The new Strategic Business Plan

As the organisation matures and continues to evolve, we reviewed our future plans to ensure that they still met the housing needs and aspirations of customers whilst growing Plymouth Community Homes as a business.

We are determined to keep residents at the heart of what we do, which is reflected in our vision:

**We are a leading growing, independent housing association with a clear social purpose, providing homes and services people want and can afford.**

Our Strategic Business Plan is structured around three key themes or pillars of:

**People   Pounds   Place**

Within these three pillars, we have nine objectives or aims which are the big things we want to achieve over the next five years.

Our plans are shown in the PCH House opposite:

A full copy of our Strategic Business Plan can be found on our website by clicking on the link:

<http://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/PCH-Strategic-Business-Plan-2017.pdf>

We have structured the 2017 Annual Report for Residents around the new plan to help us share our performance and future plans on a consistent basis.



# People

We focus on people's needs and aspirations to become the provider of choice.

**When we talk about people, we mean our customers, staff and partners – they are at the heart of everything we do.**

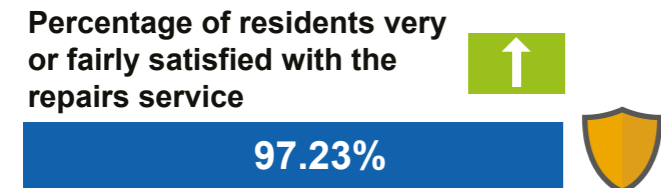
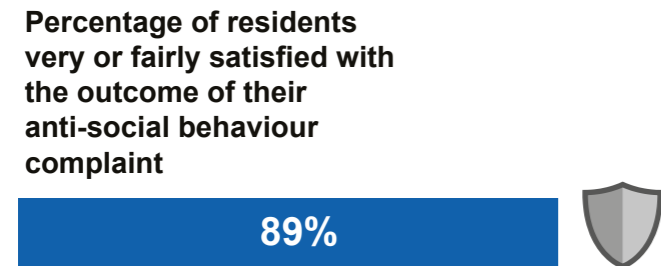
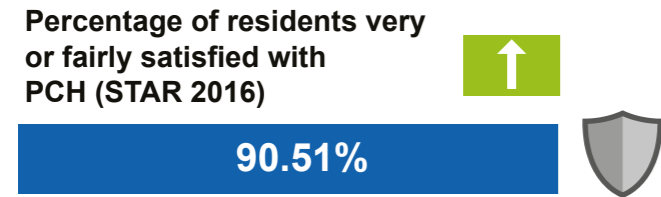
In order to become the provider of choice we said we would:

1. Provide great services to our customers;
2. Be an employer of choice;
3. Work with others to build valuable and effective partnerships.

## What have we done during 2016/17?

- Our contact centre now handles the majority of customer telephone calls for a range of services. We anticipate this will reduce our running costs over time.
- We supported independent living by installing lifeline alarm systems in over 1,500 bungalows occupied by older residents.
- The Board approved a "Valuing our People" strategy which sets out how we will sustain and optimise the performance of our staff so that residents get the very best service possible.
- Proudly achieved the Investors In People Gold award demonstrating world-class practice in people management and development.

# Our Performance



## What does this mean?



# What are we doing next?

In our strategic plan, we have set ourselves the following deliverables or actions to be achieved over the next 5 years:

- Understand our customers better to enable evidence-based decisions about services.
- Maintain or improve customer satisfaction for all our services.
- Continually drive improvement and quality of our services.
- Provide online self-service options to improve access to digital services.
- Maintain our Gold Equality and Diversity accreditation.
- Attract and retain the best staff by engaging and motivating them.
- Ensure our people are skilled and knowledgeable for personal and business benefit.
- Maintain 5-star health and safety standards.
- Contribute to city, regional and national agendas through effective partnership working.
- Maximise resources through partnership working.



# Pounds

It is important that we look after our pounds to stay financially strong to achieve our goals.

When we talk about pounds we mean all the ways we manage our money and run our business effectively for the benefit of customers.

In order to do this, we said we would:

1. Grow our business
2. Run our business effectively to provide a healthy financial and social return
3. Be commercial, innovative and enterprising

## What have we done during 2016/17?

- Current tenant rent arrears were at their lowest ever level at 1.28% of over £57million owed to us during the year.
- We worked towards a refinancing deal which saw us gain access to loan facilities to a value of £140million which supports our aim to build more homes.
- Our regulator the Homes and Communities Agency carried out an in-depth assessment of how we run the organisation and we received a G1 rating for governance (the highest rating) and a V2 rating for financial viability which is reflective of a young organisation.
- We reduced our running costs by 3% through changes to the way we do things and reducing premises costs by letting out some of our HQ building to other organisations.

# Our Performance

Current tenant rent arrears as a percentage of rent due



1.28%

What does this mean?



Better than last year



Worse than last year



Better than other Housing Associations



The same as other Housing Associations



Worse than other Housing Associations

Percentage of rental income lost due to empty properties



0.39%

Amount spent on responsive repairs compared to the annual budget



£9,616

Responsive repairs budget - £10,696

Percentage of spend on goods, services & works with businesses in the Plymouth postcode area (annual)



48.74%

Average time taken to turnaround empty homes



18.12 days

# What are we doing next?

In our strategic plan, we have set ourselves the following deliverables or actions to be achieved over the next 5 years:

- Generate at least £12million over the next 5 years through subsidy and non-core services to invest in new homes and core services.
- Maintain strong financial viability and credit ratings.
- Optimise rental income whilst maintaining sustainable, affordable homes.
- Maintain a G1 governance rating.
- Support people to maximise income through community development, employment and financial inclusion work.
- Create and fund an “ideas lab” to develop and improve our services and maximise resources through innovation.
- Maximise local, regional and national opportunities to strengthen the business.

# Place

We're all about creating places where people want to live and work.

**When we say place, we mean how we look after all the different buildings and areas we own and how we do our bit for the wider community and environment.**

In order to do this, we said we would:

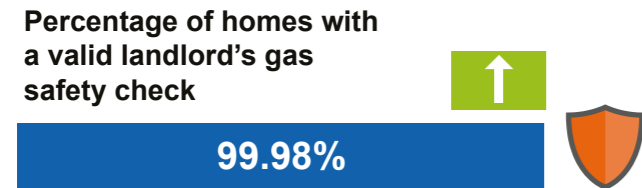
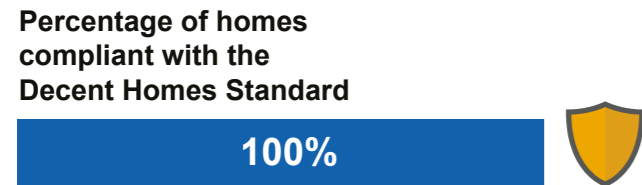
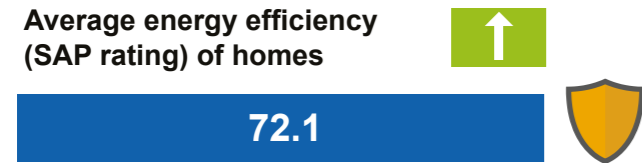
1. Manage our property and neighbourhoods to encourage thriving communities
2. Offer more homes in new ways and in new places
3. Look for greener ways of working

## What have we done during 2016/17?

- Working with residents across the city, we produced new neighbourhood plans which set out objectives for each area so that we work towards meeting the needs of individual localities.
- The community walkabouts programme has been reviewed to provide a more flexible and "on-demand" service when an issue or concern arises.
- We bought 92 homes for rent on the Little America estate from Stonewater Housing Association with estate management responsibility for a further 100 privately owned homes in the same area.
- Residents saw significant improvements to the look and feel of their neighbourhood as we completed a much-needed block refurbishment programme in the High Street and Waterloo Close area of Stonehouse.



# Our Performance



## What does this mean?



# What are we doing next?

In our strategic plan, we have set ourselves the following deliverables or actions to be achieved over the next 5 years:

- Invest in a programme to continually improve and modernise our homes, ensuring they are safe and appealing.
- Develop a homes and community PCH standard to drive quality and consistency throughout our neighbourhoods.
- Deliver 600 homes through a mixed tenure development programme by 2022 to support the housing needs of the city.
- Complete the North Prospect development programme by 2022.
- Build or acquire new homes within the Plymouth travel to work area by 2022.
- Continue to build and refurbish homes to increase energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty for our tenants.
- Invest in green technology to be more environmentally sustainable.



**Plymouth Community Homes**  
Tallyour Road,  
Crownhill,  
PL6 5DH

**Tel: 0808 230 6500**  
**Email [info@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk)**