



South Tyneside Council



# Tenants' Annual Report 2024

SOUTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL  
**HOUSING SERVICES**



Spread the word!

**THIS IS  
SOUTH  
TYNESIDE**

# Contents

Tenants introduction	3
Customer led services	4-6
Customer Services	7
Customer Feedback	8-9
Investing in customers homes	10-11
Investing in a green future	12
Adaptations	13
Keeping you safe	13-14
Repairs Services	15
Moving Home	16-17
Supporting you in your own home	18
Rent and Housing Management	19
Welfare Support	20
Keeping your community safe	21
Promoting social, environmental, and economic wellbeing	22
Social Enterprise	23
Customer Satisfaction	24
Making Money Matter	25-26



The work carried out in this report represents the work of the South Tyneside Homes Team from 2023 - 2024. South Tyneside Homes transitioned to South Tyneside Council Housing Services on 1 November 2024.



*Involved tenants meeting*

# Tenants' Introduction

**Welcome to the Tenants' Annual Report 2024. It has been written by tenants from across South Tyneside and is based on information provided by South Tyneside Homes.**

This report has been published by South Tyneside Council Housing Services and represents the work carried out before the transfer of housing services to the Council for the financial year 2023 – 2024.

Each year the Annual Report Customer Group work together on the report to update customers on aspects of services that are important and useful for them to know. In our role as tenants' we are independent and in producing this report we have examined performance to assess how housing services provided by South Tyneside Homes is delivered against regulatory requirements as well in meeting the expectations of customers.

This year for the first time we have included results from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey which is now undertaken annually - see page 24 for the results. Involved customer panels actively scrutinise this performance and the steps that are being taken by the organisation to drive improvements for customers.

## **Why we produce an Annual Report**

Significant changes have taken place to the regulation of social housing in recent years and greater emphasis is now placed on the importance of listening to the views of tenants. This report helps to demonstrate how customers are involved in examining the performance of the organisation as well in helping to shape and improve services. South Tyneside Council is responsible for ensuring that regulatory requirements are met in a transparent and accountable way and publication of an Annual Report demonstrates this for tenants and the Regulator of Social Housing.

## **Producing the Annual Report 2024**

From April to September 2024, 10 customers from two involved customer groups formed the Annual Report Customer Group. They worked together reviewing performance information, asking for further information and explanations from Service Managers, focusing on what would be interesting and important for customers to hear about in the report. In total approximately 250 volunteer hours were spent producing this report.

# View of the Lead Member for Housing

"As cabinet member for housing and community safety, I would like to say A huge thank you to the involved tenants of South Tyneside Council Housing Services, formerly South Tyneside Homes, for working diligently to create this annual report.

Tenant involvement and scrutiny has been at the heart of service delivery in South Tyneside Homes and will continue to be an integral part of how we work at South Tyneside Council Housing Services.

We have much good work ahead of us, including our capital investment programme to make sure we continue to provide good quality, safe and decent homes, supporting our ambition of building strong communities.

I hope that you find this report insightful, as I have, and I look forward to working with our involved tenants, the Housing Services delivery team and Board to bring you more insight and information in the future."



Mr Jim Foreman

# Customer-led services

## Involving customers in service development

Customers get involved with housing services to produce reports like this one and to work on projects to help improve services for customers.

This section of the report covers some of the things that customers have been involved with over the past year.

If you would like to find out more about being an involved customer, or joining a customer panel, then please get in touch :

 0300 123 6633

 [involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk)

You can type the web address below into your internet browser to join the Tenant Talk Facebook group as one way to have your voice heard: [www.facebook.com/groups/sthtenanttalk](http://www.facebook.com/groups/sthtenanttalk)

## What involved customers actually do:

"I have been an actively involved in projects to improve services for customers for 10 years. I find it very interesting as we look into the way things are done so that we can help the organisation make changes to services that will benefit customers.

For example, we are taking an in-depth look at how improvements can be made to communications with customers about getting their repair carried out. Our recommendations will be made later this year."

*Tris Francis, Scrutiny Panel chair.*

## To complete involvement projects these are the types of activities we carry out.

### We will:

- Meet with customers who have made a complaint to find out more about their experience of what happened.
- Carry out surveys with customers to get a wider picture of the issues.
- Go on site visits, for example to view empty properties.
- Discuss issues with managers of services and look at data and information.
- Meet with front line staff to discuss their experience of how services are being delivered.
- Listen to anonymised customer calls into the Customer Contact Centre to check customer service levels.

## 1596 customers engaged to help improve services:



**860** - customers engaged through local involvement and outreach activity such as engagement with community groups and third sector organisations, energy roadshows, resident high-rise and housing plus groups.



**83** - customers engaged in targeted customer experience projects to gain an in-depth understanding of their customer journey and where improvements can be made – including the Green Homes programme, getting a new home, accessing welfare support, accessing temporary accommodation and more.



**278** - members of the Tenant Talk Facebook group engaged with as a means of interaction and dialogue with customers, including through polls and surveys.



**354** - survey responses on topics including the Green Homes grant and mutual exchanges.



**21** - members on the formal panels that report findings and recommendations from project work to senior managers and Council committees.



**Over 700** - volunteer hours were spent on involvement projects that identify service improvements.



*Involved tenants meeting*

## Customer-led improvements delivered include the following:

- Improved diagnosis and advice following reports of damp and mould; 36 recommendations were made following a customer Scrutiny Panel review.
- Improved customer communications following completion of a review of the Green Homes Grant programme by the customer Scrutiny Panel; 15 recommendations for improvements are due to be delivered during 24-25.
- Complaints, Customer Service and for the Good Neighbourhood Management policies and procedures have been improved following review by the Check & Challenge customer group.
- Development of 'How to' video guides and a social media campaign following customer feedback on the mutual exchange process after 156 responses were received to a survey.
- A decrease in complaints and an increase in compliments from customers getting new homes following improvements to information provided on the Lettable Standard.
- Policies and procedures reviewed by the recently established Building Safety Champions group.

“

If you have suggestions for areas our customer panels could look at: Please e-mail your ideas to [involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk)

”

## Community outreach:

- 213 customers helped with domestic energy issues at seven energy roadshows held across the borough – see page 12.
- Promoted services to diverse community groups via in person engagement. Following this, translation services have been promoted to staff and information is also to be added to the 'hold' message via the Customer Contact Centre.

# Customer Services

## New enquiry escalation process introduced

A new process has been introduced in cases where a Contact Centre Advisor is unable to answer a customer enquiry as referral to a specialist team is needed. If initial contact cannot be made with the specialist team, a five working day response time is set up in the system, which is then escalated further if the customer receives no response.

## How we manage the quality of our response vs time taken to answer calls

On average it takes six minutes to deal with a customer enquiry but some calls take longer than others to resolve. Call quality checks are undertaken by listening to calls to identify how responses can be improved. The Customer Scrutiny Panel have observed Contact Centre Advisors at work and noted the high skill level and patience of staff.

## Stats at a glance...



The Customer Service Centre handled  
**204,483**  
calls



**75%**  
customer  
satisfaction



A digital team established to  
enhance Live Chat and the Connect  
2 facility

**89**  
compliments  
during 2022-23



**50%**  
of calls were  
answered in 30  
seconds



Increased calls resolved at first point of contact.  
During 2023-24 this increased to 80% on  
average compared to 69% during 2022-23

# Customer Feedback

## Compliments and Complaints

- 1,038 complaints received compared to 1,120 last year.
- 151 complaints taken further to stage two compared to 89 last year.
- 95 percent of stage two complaints were responded to within target timescale by the Customer Feedback Team (in line with our performance indicator).
- 822 compliments were received compared to 739 last year.

**All complaints are investigated and over 50 percent of stage one complaints were upheld.**



### Case studies:

**1** - The involved customer Check & Challenge group carried out three reviews of the complaints processes, including carrying out in-depth conversations with complainants and mystery shopping to identify where service improvements could be made.

**2** - Focus groups were held with tenants from minority community groups to understand the difficulties they face in accessing the complaints process and what improvements or support could be put in place for them. Translated documents were provided and further advice and support provided from specific service teams such as housing options and those dealing with anti-social behaviour. Staff from these services visited the groups (along with a translator) to provide information about the service, processes and how to access them. In addition, the Contact Centre have added advice about translation services to the contact centre 'hold' message.

### To make a complaint or give feedback

 **Use the online Feedback Form**

 **connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk**

 **0300 123 6633**

 **Customer Service Team, South Tyneside Council Housing Services, Town Hall and Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 2RL**

 **[www.southtyneside.gov.uk/housing](http://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/housing)**

If you would like more information about complaints and service improvements, the annual 'Complaints Performance and Service Improvements' report is available to view on the website by following the link below.



Alternatively, copies can be requested via email.





# Meeting customers' diverse needs

- 11,684 web pages were viewed with the accessibility toolbar - an increase from 6,173 in 2023. This enables users to change fonts and text sizes and can be translated into different languages.
- Enhanced interpreting services provision.
- Developed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Hub with information for staff to use.

## Getting to know our customers better

Each customer has unique needs and requirements, so staff will focus on gathering information to help it to provide services that meet each persons needs. If a customers' preference is to receive information in larger print, a different language or by e-mail, the housing team want to know this.

If customers have more complex needs then they need to know this too so they can help to provide the support that is needed. Staff will contact customers to discuss if they have any specific requirements.

**To tell them about your preferences or any requirements that you have you can call them on:  
0300 123 6633 or email: [connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk)**

# Investing in customers' homes

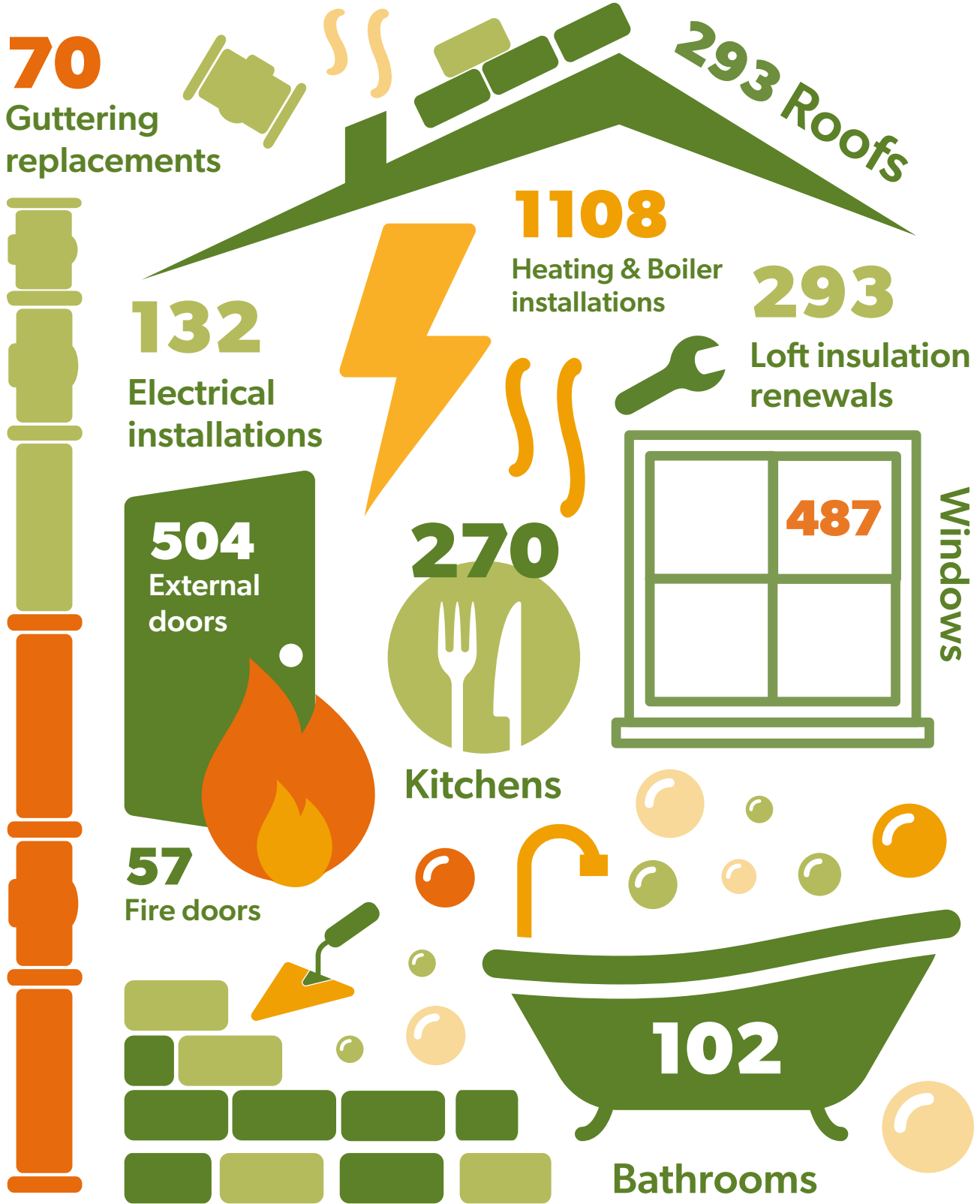
During 2023-2024 £25m was invested in homes to ensure they are well maintained, meet the Decent Homes Standard and keep customers safe.

The table below shows how this money was spent.

Investment	Amount	Percentage
External upgrades – include pointing, roof renewals and finlock gutter removal	£5,060,604	19.93
Heating upgrades - heating system and boiler renewals	£4,040,323	15.91
Door and window replacements - doors & windows upgrades	£3,778,154	14.88
Internal upgrades – includes kitchens, bathrooms and programme management	£2,918,467	11.49
Structural works – includes floor heave, wall stabilisation and canopy failure	£2,152,588	8.48
Electrical upgrades – rewires and electrical upgrades	£1,841,301	7.25
High, mid and low-rise Improvement Works – communal electrical upgrades and building safety improvements	£1,694,397	6.67
Council house building programme – 10 new properties including renewable energy technology	£1,654,110	6.51
Empty homes improvements – includes new kitchens, bathrooms, rewiring and heating upgrades.	£1,003,450	3.95
Housing plus communal upgrades – includes lighting, heating & CCTV	£908,123	3.58
Health and safety related works – includes asbestos removals	£339,756	1.34
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>£25,391,273</b>	

## What the investment has delivered:

The capital budget, which is spending on fixed items such as buildings, has helped deliver of the following planned replacements in customers homes:



# Investing in a green future

During 2023/24 plans for low carbon homes have been implemented. The design and building of 10 'A' rated homes at Hindmarch Drive for affordable rent has incorporated various types of sustainable technologies. Next year two further schemes will be started to provide affordable energy efficient 'A' rated homes at Lizard Lane and Reynolds Avenue using the same sustainable technologies and includes the Councils first low energy 'Passivhaus' housing.



*New tenants at Hindmarch Drive*



*Viewing at new property*



*Cllr Tracey Dixon visiting newly let property*

## Supporting customers to reduce carbon emissions:

During the year energy roadshows were held across the Borough providing in person advice on energy efficiency and how to reduce fuel bills, to help customers to afford to live comfortably in their home. Advice was also provided about carbon monoxide, included free welfare benefit checks, and home energy checks via the LEAP project (the local energy and money saving service). Over 200 customers were provided with assistance from housing services, Groundwork's Green Doctor, Age Concern, Citizens Advice and Northumbrian Water. In addition, over 1000 customers at risk of fuel poverty were contacted and offered free energy advice and other assistance.



*Energy Roadshow event 2024*

# Adaptations

Adaptations are installed to customers' homes to help them to continue to live independently at home. During 2023/24 the following were installed:

Adaptations installed	Number
Ramps and steps	153
Bathrooms including wetrooms	130
Stairlifts	100
Handrails & grabrails	74
Minor adaptations	53
External Alterations	31
Internal Alterations	30

# Keeping you safe

The organisation is focused on the safety of the homes of all tenants and independent assessors recently confirmed its full compliance with legal requirements and expectations for building safety and its approach to tackling damp and mould.

## Healthy Homes Team

The Healthy Homes Team tackles cases of damp, mould and condensation. It takes a 'zero-tolerance' approach and investigates all cases referred to it. Since January 2024 the team has received 2,503 survey requests and delivers all repairs and upgrades needed to help manage and remove damp and mould.



It carried out 1,442 anti-mould treatments and 1,066 upgrades to fans and 605 bricklaying jobs linked to damp and mould during the year.

*To report instances of damp, mould or condensation: call the Customer Services Centre on 0300 123 6633 or visit the South Tyneside Council Housing Services website for further information on how to report a repair.*

## High-rise and Housing Plus

### We have helped:

- Set up a Building Safety Champions Group with high-rise residents to inspect buildings together. More residents in high-rise buildings are being sought to join this group so if you are interested and are a high-rise resident please contact: [involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk)
- Produced Fire and building safety leaflets for residents of high-rise, housing plus and low-rise buildings.
- Made sure high-rise residents will be able to access virtual information about their building which is helping to keep them safe – the TwinnedIt system.
- Carried out 13,000 building safety inspections across high-rise, housing plus and low-rise buildings.



*Keeping homes safe and secure*

**JOIN THE  
BUILDING  
SAFETY  
CHAMPIONS  
GROUP!**

## Water Safety

- 1,700 water risk assessments were carried out in customers' homes during 2023/24. These assessments help to minimise occupants' risk of Legionnaires' disease, which can be found in domestic water systems.

## Electrical

- 3,610 electrical safety inspections carried out in 2023/24. | South Tyneside Council Housing Services must test each home every five years - the minimum annual target is 3,500. Every home that becomes empty is tested before it is re-let to another customer.

## Gas safety:

- Completed 15,300 gas servicing appointments and 1,267 gas safety checks for new customers.
- 6,379 emergency heating repairs attended - 99.97 percent completed within timescale.
- Over 1,100 new central heating boilers have been installed in our homes.
- 121 customers were referred for help with their heating bills – if you require help call the Customer Services Centre on 0300 123 6633.
- 56 applications to court for a warrant to gain access for essential gas safety checks and 21 warrants being executed to gain access for essential gas safety checks.
- 1,360 upgraded asbestos surveys completed.

**100 percent of properties with a gas safety certificate for the thirteenth year in a row.**



# Repairs Services

Completed **12,682** emergency repairs - 99.64 percent attended within timescale. South Tyneside Council's four hour emergency response timescale equals the best in the sector

**275** repair jobs are completed for customers every day




**101,000** requests for the repair service during the year – a 6 percent increase compared to 2022-23, equating to approximately **6,000 additional repairs**

Improvements are being made to the text messaging system to provide customers with updates and reminders in advance of their appointment as missed repairs appointments cost £42,000 in 2023/24




Completed **11,526** urgent repairs - 99.6 percent within timescale

## REPORTING A REPAIR

 via Tynetalk - textphone users please prefix our telephone number with 18001

 [connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk)

 0300 123 6633

 Customer Service Team, South Tyneside Council Housing Services, Town Hall and Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 2RL

 [www.southtyneside.gov.uk/housing](http://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/housing)

**EMERGENCY REPAIRS CAN BE REPORTED 24/7 ON 0300 123 6633.**

## Leaseholders

There are around 800 leaseholders in the Borough and they are responsible for repairs to the interior of their home. Repairs and maintenance to the structure and outside of the buildings, communal areas and communal gardens are carried out by South Tyneside Council Housing Services and paid for by leaseholders through service and other charges.

Service standards set out what level of service leaseholders can expect and these are agreed with leaseholders.

Leaseholders are able to get involved with South Tyneside Council Housing Services - see page 4.

The Tenancy Standard focuses on the way homes are allocated and how tenants are supported to maintain their tenancy.



# Moving Home

The Voids & Allocations Team support customers by carrying out the day-to-day process of managing properties from 'keys in to key out', ensuring empty homes are let to the right quality standard. The team:

- Carry out pre-offer and pre-termination visits.
- Carry out the shortlisting of properties, in accordance with the Allocations Policy.
- Advertise and market properties.
- Complete a customer checklist of any property concerns during sign-up.
- Work with Financial Inclusion, Housing Management and other services to ensure homes are let in line with performance standards.
- Work to a target of 14 days to re-let a property, following repairs.
- Manage the Mutual Exchange service.
- Carry out one month tenancy support visits to ensure customers have settled into their new home.

“

Huge thank you to Jordan and everyone else who helped with our move. We really appreciate all the help we have received. Thank you all so much. It has made a massive difference for us and removed so much pressure. *Mr Watson*

”

## Supporting tenants in their new homes

- New or vulnerable customers with limited or no support are provided with help to decorate their property.
- Customers are signposted to external support initiatives such as the Groundwork shop at the Recycle Village for help with furniture and goods which can be upcycled.
- To make it easier for customers to make arrangements with an energy supplier, a partnership with Utilita has been introduced. Customers now have one point of contact when setting up their new supplier and can choose to stay with Utilita or switch supplier when they move in.



## How are we dealing with homelessness?

- During the year 1,708 customers were provided with advice and guidance in relation to their housing situation and an additional 1,387 homeless presentations were received. Of these, 356 households have been prevented from becoming homeless.
- The number of emergency homeless units has expanded due to a high number of presentations. There are a total of 34 units comprising 24 homeless units, seven young person units and three veterans units.
- The Stay Close programme, in partnership with Children Services, supports care experienced young people and has seven dedicated properties for vulnerable young adults, which are all occupied.
- Four young people have moved on to independent tenancies and the team has managed to accommodate 24 other care experienced young people, through the "choice-based lettings process."

**836**  
households have  
been found long term  
accommodation.

Over the year, the team has developed a close working relationship with the Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Migrant Support Team, for children and families in South Tyneside. After having to leave their own countries for safety, 73 families and 143 single people have been supported in long term homes.

## Veterans Support

The Veterans Outreach Support Worker received 122 referrals during the year and supported customers into suitable accommodation. In addition, a further £24,000 additional income was accessed through SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, to assist these customers.

## Mutual Exchange

A promotional campaign has been carried out on social media in partnership with House Exchange to provide customers with the information and support they need to navigate the Mutual Exchange process. This followed customer feedback that demonstrated that understanding of the process could be improved.



*Tailored support for veterans*



*Supporting your home move*

# Supporting you in your own home

## The pre-tenancy support is provided to help:

- Vulnerable applicants wanting to move, but who may struggle with the process, and with sustaining a tenancy.
- Those who are potentially not suitably housed.

## Occupational support is provided to:

- Assess the impact someone's home is having on their long-term illness or disability.
- Match customers who have used the service to pre-adapted properties.
- Assess housing need in relation to medical, welfare or hardship.
- Liaise with other partners to ensure adaptations or aids are provided effectively.

The wait time for assessment has reduced from 94 days last year to 40 days this year. All team members are now trained Trusted Assessors, enabling the team to prescribe equipment, providing a more streamlined service for the customer.

**If you require changes or adaptations to remain independent at home – contact the Let's Talk team on: 0191 424 6000 or e-mail: [letstalk@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:letstalk@southtyneside.gov.uk)**

## Tenancy Sustainment Team

A new Tenancy Sustainment Team was introduced during the year with the aim of supporting customers to ensure their tenancy does not fail. It focuses on those at risk of tenancy failure, or with complex needs or vulnerabilities, by building a relationship with them, to work with them to identify the issues and to provide appropriate support. Issues may include failure to maintain property condition, accumulating rent arrears, gas capped due to lack of affordability, domestic abuse, mental health issues and so on.

## CASE STUDIES

### How the team supported a vulnerable customer:

A customer with a chaotic life and tenancy breaches was referred to the team. The customer had complex needs and issues including drug misuse and a previous domestic abuse relationship. The Tenancy Sustainment Officer worked with the customer to identify what support they needed. With assistance the customer has been able to sustain their tenancy, they have cleared rent arrears and re-decorated. The customer secured a sole tenancy and is considering a mutual exchange as a fresh start as their health and wellbeing has significantly improved.

### Hospital discharge support:

To support people and their recovery when they need to leave hospital, but may not be well enough to go home, Borrowdale House (formerly Housing Plus accommodation) has been developed into specialist discharge accommodation in partnership with the NHS. With 24 apartments it offers 24/7 support and on-site staff providing care and support and promotes independence, with a range of assistive technology and community facilities.



*New tenants at Hindmarch Drive*

# Rent and Housing Management

Changes have been made during the year to how general Housing Management is carried out. Housing Management teams now operate with smaller patch sizes allowing them to be more proactive to 'get behind the door' of more properties to identify at earlier stages any property condition issues and customer vulnerabilities. Customers with more complex or multiple needs are referred to the Tenancy Sustainment Team for support.

Housing Officers spend approximately 70 percent of their time on their patches, with the remaining time dealing with rent collection and other queries.

- **Rent arrears for the year was £2,586,343**

This new approach ensures services can be tailored to meet individual customer needs and ensures compliance with the new consumer standards set out by the Social Housing Regulator.

**If you are having difficulty paying your rent phone 0300 123 6633 for help and advice.**

# Welfare Support

The Welfare Support Team is a key part of action the Council is taking to promote the financial security of residents of the Borough through its anti-poverty strategy.

**The Welfare Support Team assists customers by offering the following:**

- Benefit checks, completion of forms and support with appeal cases.
- Debt advice, support with debt casework, debt solution and court representation.

## **Support can include:**

- Providing emergency food and gas & electricity vouchers for those in crisis or financial hardship.
- Providing household items such as white goods, and furniture for Community Care provision.
- Support for customers with the cost of living.
- Over £85million in financial gains was secured for residents during 2023/24.
- 4,454 applications for support received during 2023/24.

This support helps residents to sustain their homes, feed their families, keep warm and support the economy and local businesses and the team can support all residents of South Tyneside, as well as those supported by the Council placed in properties outside of the Borough.

## **Social Navigators provide intensive support**

Social Navigators work inclusively with vulnerable clients who are financially excluded, developing a person-centred approach to casework. Help includes access to welfare and debt services; employability services, help with digital skills and with access to support from other agencies.

**To find out more about the support available - contact the Welfare Support Team by phone on 0191 424 6040, or e-mail [welfaresupport@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:welfaresupport@southtyneside.gov.uk)**



# Keeping your community safe

**The Community Safety and Tenancy Enforcement Team has been working over the year to keep customers safe.**

- 99.82 percent of cases have been successfully resolved - an increase from 96.71 percent in 2022/23.

The team has an “early intervention” approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and aim to stop cases escalating to enforcement action. Examples of early intervention include:

- Home visits with police to those involved in youth disorder to prevent their behaviour escalating.
- Mediation prior to situations escalating to a point where mediation will not be effective.
- Dealing with reports early to help stop the situation escalating. This may include referring residents to drug, alcohol, or mental health services.

New initiatives with partner agencies have been introduced to tackle anti-social behaviour, including domestic abuse, youth disorder and crime hotspots. These include:

- Working with Northumbria Police, Business and Community Responders and the Community Safety Team.
- Motorbike disorder working with Northumbria Police.
- Mediation to help neighbour disputes.

## Domestic Abuse

With the introduction of a Domestic Abuse Hub staff work alongside the Police and other agencies to support and safeguard customers. Each case is looked at individually and can include the supply of safety measures to keep victims safe including:

- Letterbox jammers
- Window locks
- Door chain
- Security light

Northumbria Police may request further work is carried out to homes to ensure customer safety.

## Building safety

During the year the organisation carries out checks to identify any issues which may affect the safety of residents in buildings with communal areas, and all building compliance checks have been completed on time.

Health and safety meetings are held with customers to discuss all aspects of health and safety and fire safety in the buildings. These meetings offer customers an opportunity to voice any concerns and to put forward recommendations to improve working procedures.



**100%**  
of building  
safety checks  
completed.

# Promoting social, environmental, and economic wellbeing

## To continue to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents in Housing Plus schemes:

- Daily wellbeing calls take place.
- Annual customer care and support plan visits are carried out.
- Home safety checks and 'Customer Evacuation Assessments' are completed in a timely manner.
- New digital equipment is being installed in Housing Plus schemes to replace analogue telephone lines as the current system is being upgraded.
- New heating and hot water plant has been installed at Bamburgh Grove, Blenkinsop Court and Glenthorpe House.

## Scooter storage and safety

Most Housing Plus schemes have designated storage facilities, and to ensure safety daily building checks are carried out with advice from the Fire Safety Advisor & Compliance Team.

## Social events

Throughout the year social events take place in Housing Plus schemes and this year schemes were also visited by energy roadshows.



Housing Services team at work

# Social Enterprise

Over the year the Social Enterprise team has increased visits to schools and colleges to promote apprenticeships and Social Enterprise Traineeships.

## National Apprenticeship Week

During National Apprenticeship Week in February a career event was hosted at Jarrow Focus, South Tyneside Town Hall and Temple Park. During the year 40 people took up work experience opportunities at South Tyneside Council Housing Services. A three-day work experience event for underrepresented groups was held to encourage people to apply for future vacancies. Most requests for work experience come from students attending schools and colleges across the Borough.

Social Enterprise trainees are involved in a variety of activities that help meet business needs. This year's trainees have been gaining skills in ground maintenance, painting, street and beach cleansing, furniture removal and administration.

- They can gain experience in customer service, team building, time management, health and safety and get employability support and those recruited as trainees for periods of six months or over are offered the opportunity to achieve Functional Skills in Maths and English.
- Trainees can shadow a tradesperson of their choice.

The aim of the traineeship is to give the individuals work experience and qualifications, along with careers support to help them into work inside or outside of the organisation. Most trainees who have been on a programme go on to paid work and 10 trainees have secured work with South Tyneside Council Housing Services on a temporary or full-time basis.



*The Social Enterprise team attended a careers event at Epinay School. The team answered questions from older children about their jobs and planted flowers with the younger children.*

### CASE STUDY

Paul Harrison studied Maths, English and ICT Functional Skills at Level 2, while a trainee, which enabled him to apply for apprenticeships.



## Apprenticeship Away Day

Every year, an Apprenticeship away day is held to introduce new apprentices to existing ones in a fun and relaxed environment. The organisation has a 99 percent success rate of apprenticeships staying within the organisation.

## Apprenticeships in action

Jonathan Gill is currently a Ground Maintenance Apprentice working in the Social Enterprise team. Sunderland College awarded him with Land Based Apprentice of the Year in February 2024. The Social Enterprise team now has access to a stand-on lawn mower. The team can use this mower on larger sites, reducing the time it used to take using hand push mowers. Anthony Hall, driving the lawn mower, started as a trainee in 2019 and now works as an operative who supports our new trainees.

# Customer Satisfaction

Customers are able to have their say on the performance of South Tyneside Council Housing Services through an annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey (TSM).

There are plans to address lower satisfaction and involved customer panels actively scrutinise performance and the steps that are being taken to drive improvements for customers.

## Tenant Satisfaction Survey results 2023-24:

\* Where the results show n/a this is new question, and there is no comparative figure.

Satisfaction:	Result 2023-24	Result 2022-23
Overall	68%	78%
That my home is safe	71%	n/a*
That my home is well maintained	68%	n/a*
That communal areas are clean and well maintained	55%	63%
With the repairs service over the past 12 months	73%	n/a*
With the time taken to complete my last repair	65%	68%
That my views are listened to and acted upon	61%	67%
That I am kept informed about things that matter to me	60%	67%
That I am treated fairly and with respect	71%	81%
With the organisations approach to complaints handling	30%	n/a*
That the organisation makes a positive contribution to your area	52%	63%
With the organisations approach to handling anti-social behaviour	52%	58%



# Making Money Matter



## Focus on Expenditure

Spending	Total (£ Million)	Percentage (%)
Capital Improvements	30.4	42.5%
Repairs & Maintenance	17.2	24.0%
Housing Management	12.2	17.1%
Central Services	6.9	9.7%
Rents, Rates and Taxes	1.0	1.4%
Estate Management	2.1	2.9%
Antisocial Behaviour	0.7	1.0%
Income Management	0.9	1.3%
Tenant Involvement	0.1	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£71.5m</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Focus on Income

Spending	Total (£ Million)	Percentage (%)
Property Rents	67.4	94.3%
Garage and shop rents	1.3	1.8%
Charges for services and facilities	1.6	2.2%
Contributions towards costs	1.2	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£71.5m</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



Keeping homes safe and secure



## Did you know for every £1 of rent you pay....

**1p** is spent on miscellaneous costs including rent, rates and taxes

**43p** is paid out for capital improvements (this is the interest paid on borrowing the money to provide the properties)

**24p** is spent on repairing properties

**21p** is spent on managing tenancies

**10p** is spent on central services such as the warden call service

**1p** is the cost of specialist housing services



If you would like to request a copy of this report please contact the Involvement team on 0300 123 6633, or email: [involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:involvement@southtyneside.gov.uk)

If you know someone who needs this information in a different format, for example large print, Braille or a different language, please call the South Tyneside Council Marketing and Communications Team on 0191 424 7385.



**For further information:**

 0300 123 6633

 [connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:connect2@southtyneside.gov.uk)

 [www.southtyneside.gov.uk/housing](http://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/housing)

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