

- Bassetlaw District Council -  
**Annual Report**  
to Tenants 2019/2020



**Bassetlaw**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
— North Nottinghamshire —

**Inside:**

Our Annual Report will tell you how we performed during 2019/20 in five key areas and what we have planned for 2020/21

# Annual Report 2019/20

Each year, Bassetlaw District Council is required to tell tenants what we have achieved over the last 12 months and what our priorities are for the next year ahead.



We call this our Annual Report to Tenants, which looks at our performance in the five key areas that have been set out by Homes England - the Regulator of Social Housing – called Consumer Standards.

## These five Consumer Standards are:

- **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment**  
How we should communicate with and involve tenants.
- **Tenancy Standard**  
How we allocate our properties and support our tenants.
- **Home Standard**  
How we maintain your home.
- **Neighbourhood and Community**  
How we should work with other agencies to manage estates and tackle anti-social behaviour.
- **Value for Money**  
How we spend your rent money.

Over the next few pages we'll give you a run-down of just some of the projects that we've been working on over the 12 months between the beginning of April 2019 and the end of March 2020, in addition to how we ensure that your homes and neighbourhoods are safe, warm and great places to live.

We appreciated that it has taken a little longer than usual to provide you with this information and we apologise for this. In future, you will receive an Annual Report with your July Rent Statement.

We hope you find this report informative.



**Cllr Steve Scotthorne**  
Cabinet Member for Housing



**Alison Craig**  
Head of Housing

# Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

There are many ways in which we communicate with and involve tenants, not only through the day-to-day running of a Housing Service, but how we engage with tenants to set our own priorities and ensure that we are providing the level of service that you expect.

There are currently around 1,760 tenants who engage with Bassetlaw District Council Housing in the following ways:

- Tenant Liaison Group
- Tenant Forum
- Tenants' and Residents' Associations
- BATRA
- Tenant Voices
- Facebook Followers



This year our tenants have involved themselves in the following ways:

- We have created a new Tenant Liaison Group and Service Review Groups to scrutinise our services.
- We are helping two new TRAs to establish themselves in Worksop and Retford.
- We have given tenants access to TPAS – the tenant engagement experts to empower them to further develop tenant scrutiny and tenant engagement within their own communities.

Our Tenant Involvement and Empowerment priorities for next year include:

- Carry out a review of Tenant Engagement to improve the ways we communicate with and involve tenants.
- Undertake a Survey of Tenant Satisfaction to identify areas for improvement.
- Further develop and promote how we engage with tenants digitally.

# Tenancy Standard

This standard looks at how we allocate our properties and support our tenants. As well as week-to-week turn-around of properties, it includes our Supported Housing Service and our work to help some of our more vulnerable tenants to sustain their tenancies.

## Demand for Housing

- There are around **3,800 applicants** currently on the waiting list; this is an increase of approx. 500 on last year
- By working with private landlords and our allocations service, we have prevented **66 households** from being made homeless
- Through Homefinder, our online allocations system, **533 Properties** have been re-let to new tenants, including transfers



## Aims for Next Year

- Expand our Tenancy Sustainment Service to support more vulnerable tenants in their homes, including partnership work with hoarding charity Jigsaw.
- Review our Allocations Policy and Choice Based Lettings IT system to ensure we are helping those households who have the greatest need.
- Undertake a review of residents who are registered on our waiting list to better understand the demand for housing within Bassetlaw.

# Home Standard

Our Home Standard includes all the elements of how we maintain your home, from everyday repairs to major improvements and ensuring that your homes are safe and working efficiently. In total, during this period we have invested £10 million in improving and maintaining your homes.

## Maintaining Your Home



To understand what future improvements are needed, we have carried out a Stock Condition Survey of 30% of our properties

## Major Home Improvements

Last year we invested almost £4million in your homes, an increase of around £700k. To ensure that properties continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard we have;



## Aims for Next Year

- Deliver **£18.93 million of improvements** to our existing housing stock.
- Begin the refurbishment of Larwood House, an Independent Living Centre.
- Carry out a further Stock Condition Survey of 30% of our housing stock.
- Commission an independent audit of our gas, electric, water safety, lift safety, and asbestos management.
- Review all our Fire Risk Assessments in communal areas of flats and Independent Living Centres.

# Neighbourhood and Community Standard

We do our best to make sure that your neighbourhoods, as well as your homes, are safe and enjoyable places to live.



Our projects during 2019/20 have ranged from creating new parking areas for residents and making essential repairs, to opening a brand new 52 apartment, Independent Living and Extra Care Centre in Worksop called Priory Court.

We also take anti-social behaviour extremely seriously and in partnership with the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, we have dealt with 188 cases including low-level and high-level ASB.

## **This action includes:**

- Issuing Community Protection and Formal Warnings and Notices to individuals whose behaviour has had an adverse impact on a community.
- 'Closing' three properties due to extremely serious ASB. The tenant was then evicted or their tenancy was surrendered.

## **Our caretakers also work hard to keep your neighbourhoods clean and tidy, and during 2019/20 they cleared:**

- 222 tonnes of fly-tipped waste, garden waste and rubbish.
- They also removed 16 incidents of graffiti, six of which were offensive.

## **Aims for Next Year**

- We will be investing around £1.9million to improve our estates and communal areas, including work to parking, footpaths, garage sites, fences and boundaries.
- We will start to build the first phase of around 120 new homes at Radford Street, Manton.
- Carry out a review of the Council's housing land, garage sites, and other assets and agree an approach to invest in and improve them, or use them to generate additional funds for the housing service.

# Value for Money

The Housing Service's budget for 2019/20 was £27.394m and we strive to offer value for money for our tenants in many different ways.



We have **saved a total of £1 million** since the Housing Service was brought back under the control of Bassetlaw District Council, by adapting our staffing structures, retendering contracts and removing budgets that are no longer needed.

- During 2019/20 we collected just over £25.7m in rent, which is 98.6% of the rent and arrears that were due to be paid to Bassetlaw District Council.
- Retendered our Empty Property Repair Contract (Voids) and brought some elements of the work back in house to ensure greater control and reduce costs.

Our Rents Team and Money Advisors can provide budgeting advice and agree affordable repayment plans should you fall into arrears with your rent. Thanks to their work:

- Our current rent arrears are just £276,000 - this accounts for 1% of money due to be paid in the year.
- We currently have 1,238 households in receipt of Universal Credit. This is 19% of all our tenancies.

## Aims for Next Year

- Undertake a full review of our Repairs and Maintenance Service to identify ways in which tenants can report repairs online and book suitable appointments, ensure that the way our operatives work is more efficient, and how we undertake works on a planned basis to deliver more value for money.
- Continue to identify other areas where we can work more efficiently and reduce costs, which will be re-invested back into services to tenants, e.g. repairs, new housing, estate improvements.
- Continue to review external contracts with a view to bringing work back in house where possible to ensure greater value for money.

# Contact us



0800 590 542



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[customer.services@bassetlaw.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@bassetlaw.gov.uk)



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Visit us at:

Retford Office

17B The Square, Retford, DN22 6DB

Worksop Office

Queen's Buildings, Potter Street, Worksop, S80 2AH

Carlton Forest House

Hundred Acre Lane, Worksop, S81 0TS

All offices are open on an **appointment only** basis.

If you need any help communicating with us or understanding any of our documents, please contact us on **0800 590 542**.



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