Value for Money
Annual Assurance Statement
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Welcome

I am delighted to present our Value for Money (VFM) Annual Assurance Statement for 2018 / 2019 which outlines what VFM means to us and our stakeholders.

It is with great pride that I take up the position of Chief Executive of WDH following Kevin Dodd’s retirement.

Whilst I have recently been appointed Chief Executive, I have been a Director at WDH for the last year and a great supporter of WDH for more than a decade.

Over the last year WDH under the leadership of Kevin Dodd has gone from strength to strength and we continued to deliver on the promises made to our tenants, our Board and our stakeholders across the district.

Our business model is based on maximising our social dividend, which is invested back into the services we provide and developing new homes in order to deliver our ambitions and achieve our Vision to Create Confident Communities. Improving VFM across our services is key to this and at the top of our agenda when investing in services and making decisions for future growth and developments.

Our customers are at the heart of our approach to securing VFM and we continue to consult with and involve them in designing and improving services to make sure we focus on what is important to them and continue to meet the high standards they expect.

Our 2019 Tenant Satisfaction Survey has shown increased levels of satisfaction with the services we provide, with 87.9% of those tenants surveyed satisfied, an increase of 2.5% on our 2018 performance. We are pleased with this significant achievement, and continue to strive forward to meet customer expectations.

Building on our previous successes we have continued to achieve national recognition through a number of awards and accreditations.

In June 2018 we were reaccredited with the Customer Service Excellence Standard following a rigorous three day on site assessment. As part of the assessment we were recognised as delivering Compliance Plus status across 10 areas of the criteria, recognising that we are delivering services over and above what customers would normally expect, including our innovative Housing Support Co-ordinator roles and Community Anchors.

Partnership working is essential to us running an effective business and core to our approach in delivering VFM. During 2018 / 2019, we have continued to strengthen and build partnerships to help achieve our growth plans; Bridge Homes, our joint venture with Wakefield Council, delivered a further 56 homes.

Our involvement in the local Clinical Commissioning Group, has seen our relationship with partners in the local care and health sector go from strength to strength, delivering a number of successful initiatives including Mental Health Navigators and Housing Co-ordinator roles. More information on this can be found on page 59.

We have also become a Trusted Landlord with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), further strengthening our partnership working at a local, regional and national level to ensure tenants are supported effectively following the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) across the Wakefield district in November 2018.

As a business we set ourselves stretching targets to ensure we provide the very best VFM in the services we provide to our customers.

This document demonstrates our key achievements in improving VFM during 2018 / 2019. It sets out how we are performing against key targets, including VFM metrics set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and the Sector Scorecard metrics developed by HouseMark, demonstrating how our performance compares to others inside and outside the housing sector.

We have secured a significant number of achievements and made a number of positive steps forward during 2018 / 2019. But equally we recognise that we still have work to do in a number of areas as we strive forward to deliver improved VFM. A snapshot of some of our key achievements are included over the page and illustrated further throughout the remainder of this document. Pages 76 to 79 set out future plans and targets. I hope you enjoy reading this document and find it informative.

Andrew Wallhead
Chief Executive
How are we doing?

**Green**

- We built or acquired 402 new homes exceeding our target of 400.
- Our core overheads as a proportion of adjusted turnover were 7.2%, performing better than our target of 7.5%.
- 89% of tenants were satisfied that their rent provides VFM compared to 87.8% in 2017 / 2018.
- Employee absence due to sickness reduced to 8.38 days per full time employee, just short of our target of eight days.
- Spend on our capital improvement programme was £28.6m against a target of £31.2m. Of this, £14.9m was invested in long term improvement works to roofs and estate environmental projects, £5.8m was invested in our Independent Living Scheme (ILS) improvement programme, and £7.9m in compliance and planned works.
- We completed 6,036 validated electric tests against a planned programme of 6,219, moving from a 10 year to a five year inspection cycle.

**Amber**

- We achieved cashable efficiency savings of £459,000 against a target of £750,000.
- We reduced the number of ‘red’ properties, those requiring high levels of investment to maintain them to required standards over the long term or that are in low demand, to 521 against a target of 495. Plans are in place for the majority of these properties.
- 89% of tenants were satisfied that their rent provides VFM compared to 87.8% in 2017 / 2018.
- Current and former rent arrears amounted to £6.79m well within our target of £7.37m.
- We fixed 93% of repairs first time, performing on target.
- Our average time to re-let properties was 17 days, performing better than our target of 18 days.

**Red**

- We achieved cashable efficiency savings of £459,000 against a target of £750,000.
- We reduced the number of ‘red’ properties, those requiring high levels of investment to maintain them to required standards over the long term or that are in low demand, to 521 against a target of 495. Plans are in place for the majority of these properties.
Introduction

Our Vision

Our Vision is to create confident communities through investment in people, properties, places and improved performance.

Our Vision is supported by our Mission:

‘To inspire, transform and promote excellence.’

and our Values:

‘To be creative, inclusive and work with integrity.’

We have set out three, rolling five-year milestones to achieve our Vision:

• 2020 - An enterprise with social impacts: through developing a model for sustainable living in mixed tenure communities.
• 2025 - Making real change through social outcomes: through working collaboratively and inclusively to deliver services people want.
• 2030 - Improving lives through social enterprise: through the promotion of self-sufficiency by investing in tenant led businesses.

During 2019 / 2020 we will work with our stakeholders to review our business strategy and develop our Vision to 2035.

Our Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives are:

• to be a positive force of leadership and influence to develop the potential of people;
• to be a partner of choice to create better places to live;
• to be a landlord of choice by putting the customer first; and
• to adopt best practice in good governance.

Business Strategy

Our Business Strategy, ‘Delivering the Vision’, sets out how we intend to achieve our objectives and ambitions; and the ways we will secure funding and direct resources and savings to achieve them.

Through partnership work with our stakeholders we aim to meet the needs and aspirations of local people. Our objective is to make sure we are at the forefront of delivering positive change that delivers VFM and increases our social dividend. This is the surplus available after meeting our core operating costs which is invested in activities to generate a social return.

To ensure continued focus on VFM we consider each of our ambitions set out in our Business Strategy from a VFM perspective as shown in Table 1, we use a number of indicators across the business to help us measure progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Our Ambitions to 2020</th>
<th>VFM Perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be a positive force of leadership and influence to develop the potential of people.</td>
<td>Opportunities for All: Maximise opportunities for our people and those who want to work for us.</td>
<td>Corporate: Embed VFM principles in decision making and service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be a partner of choice to create better places to live.</td>
<td>Building Better Places: Invest in more new homes and land to meet the growing need for affordable housing and become a leading regional housing provider.</td>
<td>Community: Maximise the opportunities for regeneration through the elimination of waste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be a landlord of choice by putting the customer first.</td>
<td>Delivering Customer Excellence: Create excellent customer experience by offering a range of services that maximise choice, opportunity, health and wellbeing.</td>
<td>Customer: Deliver cost effective, targeted services through tenant involvement and procurement best practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To adopt best practice in good governance.</td>
<td>A Digital Future: Be a digital business, and enable our tenants to maximise their digital opportunities.</td>
<td>Commercial: Maximise positive outcomes for stakeholders from our assets and resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following pages set out how we have continued to improve VFM across the business during 2018 / 2019 and our future plans for 2019 / 2020.
Consulting on and communicating VFM

VFM is considered by our Operational Committee and Neighbourhood Panels when reviewing and approving plans and policies and through performance monitoring. An update is also provided annually on the launch of the VFM Annual Assurance Statement.

We involve tenants in the review and improvement of services using our Customer Excellence Group.

We ask tenants for their views about VFM for repairs and rent in our annual tenant satisfaction survey.

Our Operational Committee monitors resident involvement activity to ensure it delivers value for money and this is scrutinised further by the Resident Involvement Monitoring Group.

Our Audit and Risk Committee gets quarterly updates which include independent reports from our internal auditors PwC. Every internal audit considers VFM.

Our Board receives regular updates and assurance through performance reports and management accounts which identify performance, efficiencies and any redirection of resources.

We communicate and consult on VFM with different stakeholders in various ways.

We use social media and tenant newsletters to engage with tenants about VFM and encourage their feedback.

VFM is a constant feature on our website where tenants can provide feedback anytime. Every year we publish this VFM Annual Assurance Statement online and create an online summary.

We publish VFM stories on our website throughout the year as well as details of all expenditure over £500 and how we are performing against our targets.

Through local partnerships, joint ventures and working arrangements, VFM and efficiency discussions are used to drive growth and benefit all parties involved.

In our annual survey to all leaseholders we ask if they have used our ‘pay for use’ repair service and whether it was good VFM.

Day to day consideration of VFM by our employees is an integral part of how we deliver and improve the services we provide. We continually engage with employees to seek their ideas on how to improve VFM across the business.

Our business model

Our business model is based on maximising our social dividend to deliver our four ambitions. It enables us to invest in homes and strengthen our local communities through reducing benefit dependency, supporting current and future forms of tenure and maximising the social return on investment (SROI) achieved for the benefit of our communities.

By supporting the delivery of growth, productivity and VFM we will expand our core business and invest in new developments in a broader geographical area where there is a clear strategic advantage, increasing our social dividend and demonstrating added value.

Increased commercial development will drive up our social dividend, enabling us to maximise investment in new properties and regeneration, as well as improving sustainable tenures.

Our Board

Tenants

Employees

Leaseholders

Partners

Diagram 1: Business model illustrated

Diagram 2: Consulting on and communicating VFM
Delivering VFM through social value

Our aim is to make sure we are at the forefront of delivering positive change that delivers VFM and increases our social dividend.

Social dividend is the surplus remaining after our core housing functions are paid for, this is invested in activities to generate a social return. During 2018 / 2019 £74.2 million of social dividend has been generated and reinvested in delivering new homes and a range of other services for our tenants and communities, delivering an estimated social value of at least £387.5m.

We measure our impact on people’s lives by using SROI. Which is the additional social, economic and environmental value that results from our activities. It estimates, in financial terms, the positive benefit, both present and future that the reinvestment of our social dividend is expected to have on our customers, our stakeholders and our local communities.

We have developed a robust approach for calculating our SROI, based on nationally recognised methodologies, and available national financial proxies to measure those benefits, including those produced by the Housing Association Charitable Trust.

Diagram 3, pages 14-15, shows a number of initiatives which generated a social return from the social dividend invested.

“The service which I received from the WDH was excellent all round. The man who came was so polite and explained everything. Really, really excellent thank you.”
## Delivering customer excellence

### Cash Wise
Supporting tenants to take control of their finances.
- 2,668 one-to-one visits to tenants and 15,138 contacts through phone calls, online or correspondence;
- UC support to 1,932 customers;
- support to unlock £1.7m in additional benefit, support grants, reduced utility costs and access to food banks;
- support to tenants to complete 1,287 benefit forms; and
- delivered the Cash Wise Life Choices schools programme to 900 young people.

**Estimated social return £3.1m.**

### Care Link
Providing Care Link services and 24 hour responder service.
- responded to 4,065 incidents which may have resulted in hospital admission without our intervention saving the NHS £1.5m;
- prevented ambulance calls and hospital admissions for 1,983 calls in relation to falls in the home saving the NHS £13.8m;
- prevented nearly 50,000 calls to 999 and 111 saving the NHS £631,000.

**Estimated social return £3.5m.**

### Debt Team
Providing tenants with support to manage debt.
- completed 40,613 outreach visits;
- reduced the number of evictions by nine and tenants at risk of eviction by 1,064;
- helped 2,039 households to create a household budget and provided personal budgeting support to 990 individuals;
- supported tenants with applications to unlock £631,000 grants; and
- helped to refer 1,167 tenants to other services.

**Estimated social return £3.5m.**

### Adoptions and Occupational Therapy teams
Providing adaptations to homes to support tenant health and wellbeing.
- carried out 787 assessments for adaptations in the home;
- completed 105 same day assessments and minor installations;
- completed 329 assessments for rehousing on medial grounds;
- carried out 111 accompanied viewings to ensure accommodation is suitable;
- completed 1,643 minor adaptations; and
- carried out 122 property adaptation feasibility assessments.

**Estimated social return £1m.**

### Independent living schemes
Providing tenants with health and wellbeing support services.
- group social activities to 51,198 participants;
- housing related support to individuals through our Community Support Workers, Extra Care Service or Residential Scheme Manager Service; and
- rapid Response Service to 1,574 tenants living in an ILS.

**Estimated social return £2.7m.**

### Tenancy Ready Team
Supporting tenants to maintain successful tenancies.
- carried out 276 interventions to support customers to obtain accommodation and retain existing tenancies.

**Estimated social return £91,000.**

### Improving community safety and managing antisocial behaviour (ASB)
In 2018 / 2019 we:
- worked with 11 schools in WDH neighbourhood areas to raise awareness of ASB and to help promote positive behaviour;
- ensured 81% of tenants were satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was handled; and
- ensured 78% of tenants were satisfied with the outcome of reported ASB.

**Estimated social return £78m.**

### Opportunities for all

#### Apprentices
- Created eight construction and four office apprenticeships.
#### Training our employees
- Delivered 703 training courses and supported 219 qualifications for employees.
- Delivered our Leadership Extended Achievement Programme to nine employees.

**Estimated social return £31m.**

### Community Employment Advisors
- Supported 229 individuals to find full or part time employment.
- Provided just over £15,000 of grants to 22 community organisations.

**Estimated social return £14.5m.**

### Training for Employment Programme
- Provided practical employment training to 40 individuals in environmental assistant roles.
- Provided 1,104 mentoring sessions to individuals.
- Eight individuals moved on to full time employment.
- Delivered our Community Leadership Programme to 50 young people.

**Estimated social return £17m.**

### Building better places

#### New homes
- Added 402 new social housing homes to our property portfolio.
#### Upgrading existing stock, ILS and regeneration
- Ensuring properties are safe, secure and energy efficient.
#### Estate and environmental enhancements
- Improving our estates to ensure they are pleasant areas to live and play.

**Estimated social return £205m.**

### A digital future
- Rolled out Phase 1 of our Dynamics enterprise resource planning solution making process efficiencies and productivity savings across our finance, HR, payroll and procurement functions.
- Continued to implement a range of digital initiatives to improve access to services and make cost and productivity savings, including:
  - the launch of a new Employee Hub, an upgrade from the Intranet;
  - the introduction of our noise nuisance app for tenants to help in gathering evidence in noise nuisance cases; and
  - the new electronic forms to replace paper forms within Homesearch and Occupational Therapy.
- 40% of all contacts with our OneCALL customer service team were made digitally through tenants’ online accounts or email.

**Estimated social return £182.5m.**

---

**Diagram 3: Social dividend and social return on investment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total income</th>
<th>Less core operating costs</th>
<th>Social dividend</th>
<th>Creating sustainable tenancies, workforce and business.</th>
<th>Creating sustainable assets.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£155.6m</td>
<td>£81.4m</td>
<td>£74.2m</td>
<td>£5.3m</td>
<td>£62.8m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social return**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social dividend</th>
<th>Social return</th>
<th>SROI</th>
<th>£387.5m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£74.2m</td>
<td>£120m</td>
<td>5.22:1</td>
<td>£5.22 for every £1 invested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diagram 1: Social dividend and social return on investment**
Progress against VFM targets and actions

VFM targets
The Board agreed six key VFM targets for the 2018 / 2019 financial year. Progress against them was closely monitored and reported to the Board throughout the year.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least £750,000</td>
<td>£459,000</td>
<td>Not Achieved</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No more than eight days</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>Nearly Achieved</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td></td>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£31.2m</td>
<td>£28.6m</td>
<td>Nearly Achieved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing: Current and former rent debt.</th>
<th>2018 / 2019 Target</th>
<th>2018 / 2019 Actual</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than £7.36m</td>
<td>£6.79m</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Delivery: Validated electric tests completed against planned.</th>
<th>2018 / 2019 Target</th>
<th>2018 / 2019 Actual</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6,219</td>
<td>6,036</td>
<td>Nearly Achieved</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Delivery: Gas services completed against planned.</th>
<th>2018 / 2019 Target</th>
<th>2018 / 2019 Actual</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28,335</td>
<td>29,261</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Progress against VFM targets 2018 / 2019

- **Finance / Viability:** £459,000 of recurring cashable efficiency savings were generated for reinvestment in the delivery of additional homes, existing assets and delivering increased social added value. This was less than the target of £750,000, reflecting the increasingly difficult nature of achieving additional recurring savings each year. Therefore, a lower target of £250,000 for 2019 / 2020 has been agreed by our Board.

- **Resource capacity:** The average number of days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent (FTE) employee (on a 12 month average basis) during 2018 / 2019 was 8.38 days, just over the target of eight days. Performance showed improvement during the financial year from 8.71 days in 2017 / 2018. Improvements reflect continued efforts to implement a range of measures to reduce sickness and support employees to return to work. Focus was paid to addressing sickness in relation to mental health, with programmes of training and awareness delivered to employees throughout the organisation.

- **Development / Growth:** During 2018 / 2019, £29.4m was invested in new build development and acquisitions, adding 402 social housing homes, exceeding the target of 400.

- **Reinvestment in Assets:** £28.6m was invested in the capital improvement programme, of which £14.9m was invested in long term improvement works to roofs and estate environmental projects, £5.8m was invested in the ILS improvement programme, and £7.9m in compliance and planned works.

- **Housing:** The amount of current and former tenant debt was £6.79m. This increased slightly from the 2017 / 2018 position of £6.58m, performing better than the target of £7.36m. The results were positive given the introduction of UC across the district from November 2018. This high level of performance reflects the additional resources invested in the Debt and Cash Wise teams to support tenants and proactively manage cash collection.

- **Programme Delivery:** The annual programme of electrical tests included 6,219 tests, of which 6,102 were completed and 6,036 of these validated, narrowly missing targets. Of the 183 not validated, 66 were identified as not requiring an inspection and 117 are difficult to access properties which are progressing through our access procedure to ensure the required tests can be fully completed. There were no gas services outstanding beyond their due date, with 29,261 gas services being completed in the year, exceeding the planned programme by 926.
Satisfaction targets

We set three perception targets for the year, to ensure we meet and exceed the expectations of all stakeholders.

During 2018 / 2019 our tenant satisfaction survey score rose to 87.9%. This was on target and an increase of 2.5% points on the previous year’s performance.

We also benchmark ourselves against leading commercial businesses, including Amazon and John Lewis, using TLF Research’s Satisfaction Index™ league tables, which measure satisfaction levels across approximately 1,100 other companies and 140 housing associations. The results show our satisfaction scores are within the top quartile of all other organisations.

Employee satisfaction with WDH as a place to work strengthened during the last survey in 2017 / 2018, increasing by 1.5% to 84.6%, exceeding the challenging target of 83.5%.

The next employee survey will take place during 2019 as part of preparations for Investors in People reaccreditation.

Board satisfaction continued to be 100%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board satisfaction</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee satisfaction</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>Not measured</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant satisfaction</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Progress against satisfaction targets 2018 / 2019

“Could not have improved it. Excellent response, timely, friendly staff and a good job done. Excellent service.”
## Progress against Sector Scorecard and VFM metrics

We compare performance against the sector using the Sector Scorecard. Table 4 shows how our performance compared over five themes for 2017 / 2018 along with our performance for 2018 / 2019. These comparisons include RSH VFM Metrics which are used by the Regulator of Social Housing to measure the performance of housing associations as part of its compliance against the VFM Standard.

Our aim is to create high levels of satisfaction by reducing costs and delivering high quality service.

### How do we perform?

#### Business health:
- The overall operating margin, excluding the surplus from the disposal of housing property, is 19.5% and the social housing margin, on the same basis, is 23.4%. These margins show a deterioration in financial performance since 2017 / 2018, as a result of higher operating costs, but reflect the ambition of the Board to improve the life chances of tenants.
- Interest cover in earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation, less improvement works capitalised ('EBITDA MRI') has reduced compared to 2017 / 2018 as a result of increased operating expenditure. However, we still maintain a healthy margin for potential future development.

#### Development:
- In 2018 / 2019 some £29.4m was invested in new build development and acquisitions, adding 402 new social housing homes, equivalent to 1.3% of stock. No non-social housing units were delivered. We expect to remain upper quartile for the numbers of units developed.
- Gearing continues to reduce steadily as a result of an increase in the valuation of housing properties, whilst the level of outstanding loans increased marginally, and strong cash flows continue to minimise borrowing requirements.

#### Effective asset management:
- The return generated from core housing assets (ROCE) of 4.1% is lower than 2017 / 2018, but in-line with Board expectations and the approved Business Plan. This is largely due to a lower surplus in 2018 / 2019 compared to 2017 / 2018, as a result of increased operating costs, including pension costs and increased planned investment in our maintenance programmes. Our asset base has continued to strengthen with housing stock values increasing. Performance is expected to remain median quartile.
- Occupancy performance remains strong, indicating high ranking performance.
- The ratio of responsive repairs to planned maintenance at 0.55 remains relatively consistent to 2017 / 2018, with the investment being some £31m (2017 / 2018: £27.2m). We continue to invest in our stock to maintain long term viability.

#### Operating efficiencies:
- The headline social housing cost per unit for 2018 / 2019 was £3,311 in comparison to £2,986 in 2017 / 2018, a slight increase on 2017 / 2018, reflecting the Board’s ambition to maintain our stock at the highest standard and deliver positive social outcomes in support of the Vision.
- Rent collection also continues to demonstrate strong performance, and is median performance compared to peers.
- Overheads as a percentage of adjusted turnover in 2018 / 2019 remained relatively static compared to 2017 / 2018. Benchmarking performance is expected to remain in upper quartile.

### Table 4: Progress against Sector Scorecard and VFM metrics

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business health</strong></td>
<td>Operating margin (overall)</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>33.17%</td>
<td>29.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operating margin (social housing lettings)</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>36.44%</td>
<td>32.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EBITDA MRI interest cover</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>263.3%</td>
<td>321.00%</td>
<td>237.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
<td>Number of units developed</td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New supply delivered percentage (social housing)</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New supply delivered (non social housing)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gearing</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>49.50%</td>
<td>33.04%</td>
<td>45.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes achieved</strong></td>
<td>Percentage of respondents very or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>94.70%</td>
<td>92.81%</td>
<td>87.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investment in communities</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1,434,514</td>
<td>£774,523</td>
<td>£530,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage re-investment</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>10.95%</td>
<td>8.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effective asset management</strong></td>
<td>Return on capital employed (ROCE)</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.84%</td>
<td>5.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occupancy</td>
<td></td>
<td>99.7%</td>
<td>99.50%</td>
<td>99.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ratio of responsive repairs to planned maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating efficiencies</strong></td>
<td>Headline social housing cost per unit</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,986</td>
<td>£2,772</td>
<td>£3,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rent collected from current and former tenants as a percentage of rent due</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>99.72%</td>
<td>100.14%</td>
<td>99.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overheads as a percentage of adjusted turnover</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.40%</td>
<td>8.31%</td>
<td>10.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The amount invested in communities for every pound generated in 2018 / 2019 remained fairly consistent with 2017 / 2018 and we expect to continue to maintain upper quartile performance.

Reinvestment in new and existing properties has increased marginally to 6.7% in 2018 / 2019 from 5.9% in 2017 / 2018. Performance for 2018 / 2019 is expected to remain median quartile.
Headline social housing costs

Our headline social housing cost performance is measured and benchmarked nationally using data taken from the global accounts analysis published annually by the RSH.

Indicative performance for 2018 / 2019 shows a marginal increase in unit costs to £3,311 compared to £2,986 in 2017 / 2018. We anticipate that performance may fall at the lower end of the median quartile when compared to other housing associations, moving from the 2017 / 2018 lower quartile position. Performance reflects the Board’s ambition to maintain our housing stock at the highest standard and deliver positive social outcomes in support of our Vision.

EFQM benchmarking

In 2015, we achieved the highest business award possible, the EFQM European Business Excellence Award, and in 2017 we were rated as a Platinum Business as part of the launch of the EFQM Global Index Programme.
**Corporate Perspective - Creating a sustainable workforce**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Progress During the 2018 / 2019 Financial Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider recruiting apprentices to vacant posts to help offset some of the Apprentice Levy costs. Potentially five additional apprentices could be recruited on this basis per annum, depending on the number of appropriate roles that become vacant.</td>
<td>Three new office apprentices were recruited into roles and recruitment of one further office based apprentice was underway by the end of March 2019. Recruitment underway for four construction apprentices to begin employment in August 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significantly invest in employees' health and wellbeing, providing support, improving engagement, performance and resilience, to improve attendance and reduce lost capacity.</td>
<td>A number of initiatives were delivered to support and improve the health and well-being of employees, with a particular focus on mental health, including mental health awareness training and Mental Health Champions. Individual resilience training was delivered to employees. Employee sickness absence reduced to 8.38 days from 8.71 days 2017 / 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and plan for future employee resource requirements through workforce planning.</td>
<td>Workforce planning was completed within 11 service areas including corporate services, finance, legal and neighbourhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a new IT system to enhance our ability to analyse costs on a property by property basis, supporting better asset management, business growth and to identify future savings.</td>
<td>Phase 1 of our Dynamics enterprise resource planning solution was deployed in April 2019 within HR, payroll, and finance, including implementation of an integrated purchase ordering solution. Planning for a Phase 2 will commence during 2019 / 2020 within asset management, once further work to embed and support Phase 1 has been completed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community Perspective - Creating sustainable assets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Progress During the 2018 / 2019 Financial Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forge new partnerships with land suppliers and developers and develop proposals for large scale regeneration projects.</td>
<td>Dialogue continued with Wakefield Council in relation to schemes for the regeneration of Pontefract, Wakefield and Knottingley. The schemes will be progressed during 2019 / 2020 onwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand our new build and acquisitions programme over the medium term.</td>
<td>402 new social housing homes delivered through our new build and acquisitions programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a new waste management contract by 2019 to secure our commitment to recycling and efficiency.</td>
<td>Waste management contract re-tendered. It is expected that the new contract will deliver savings of £25,000 per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactively manage and target investment through a renewed focus on active asset management following the resetting of our capital programme to a prudent approach.</td>
<td>Investment of £28.6m for a range of improvements to our properties through our Capital Investment Programme including: £14.9m for re-roofing projects and estate environmental projects. £7.9m for planned works (including electrical testing and lift replacements), compliance and fire protection works; and £5.8m for renovation of our ILSs including: Baileygate Court, Pontefract; Springhills; Outwood (including the provision of 14 new homes); Musgrave Court, Lupset; and Fairfield Court, South Elmsall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a revised fire safety strategy for multi-story properties with a pilot project to meet the changing regulatory environment following Grenfell.</td>
<td>Successful pilot initiative implemented within our multi-storey property at Low Cross Court. Plans in place to roll this out across our remaining eight high rise buildings over a three year programme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 4: 2018 / 2019 Progress against actions for improving VFM
Action Progress During the 2018 / 2019 Financial Year

Deliver tenant priorities including supporting those affected by UC and the reduction in public services and reducing tenants’ energy bills to lift them out of fuel poverty.

- UC rolled out across the Wakefield district in November 2018. We have continued to respond to the challenges. Action taken includes:
  - developing partnership working with DWP and other vital stakeholders;
  - integration of the DWP Landlord Portal within our existing processes to support tenants with claiming UC at the earliest opportunity.
  - Awarded nearly £1m of external funding to support our ambitions to alleviate fuel poverty.
  - Energy and water efficiency and switching advice provided to customers through one-to-one tenant visits and attendance at five events across the Wakefield district.

Work with partners to extend care and wellbeing support, reduce ASB, nuisance and burglary rates on our estates, which in turn reduces the turnover of properties.

- A number of successful partnerships to deliver care and wellbeing support were implemented including our Mental Health Navigators (see pages 58 and 59 for further details).
- Partnership work to reduce ASB, nuisance and burglary on our estates continued. Nuisance / ASB complaints increased by 10.2% from the level in 2017 / 2018, this is positive as it shows tenants remain very willing to report issues to us. In the same period reports made directly to the Police fell. There were 422 burglaries in WDH neighbourhoods, a slight increase from 377 in 2017 / 2018 as Police now include break-ins to garages and outbuildings in these figures.
- Tenancy turnover remained low at 6.40%, performing better than the target of 7.5%.

Increase the proportion of tenants who feel their rent offers value for money to 85%.

- Our 2019 Tenant Satisfaction Survey showed that 89% of residents were satisfied that their rent offers value for money.

Review our offer to tenants and develop an operational framework for managing properties not in the Wakefield district.

- A new operational framework was developed and will be implemented during 2019 / 2020.

Develop new performance framework for estate management to deliver cost effective, targeted services through tenant involvement and procurement best practice.

- The framework to improve the way we manage our estates and involve tenants was developed. This will be rolled out by our estate management service during 2019 / 2020 across our estates.

Roll out Bright customer feedback to other areas of the business to increase customer satisfaction.

- We continue to use Bright UK’s ‘voice of the customer’ system to gather real time customer feedback about the service provided by our Technical Services and OneCALL contact centre teams. This helps us continually improve the service we provide, 92% of customers were satisfied with the service received.

Customer Perspective - Creating sustainable tenancies

Commercial Perspective - Creating a sustainable business
Ensuring we have a sustainable workforce with the right skills and competencies to deliver services is critical to the ongoing success of our business.

If we are to continue to attract and retain the right calibre of employees, it is vital that our offer to people is fit for purpose and attractive in an increasingly competitive market.

Our Organisational Development Plan 2018 to 2020 sets out how we will meet current and future business challenges by attracting, retaining and developing our people, encouraging employees to take advantage of opportunities available to them and maximise their potential.

## Creating a sustainable workforce

### Workforce planning

Ensuring we have the right people, in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills to effectively deliver services and our intended priorities is critical to our success.

Workforce planning gives us valuable insight into our future resourcing requirements and enables us to identify our key priorities and the employee resources required to deliver these.

During 2018 / 2019 we completed reviews in 11 service areas.

During 2019 / 2020 we will be focusing on our Assets, Housing and Technical Services functions and the development of our approach to workforce planning to roll out across the business.

### Apprentices

Since it was introduced in 2005, our Apprenticeship Programme has gone from strength to strength.

The Apprenticeship Levy introduced in 2017, means we are now required to pay a contribution, based on monthly salary costs, into a national pot to support the delivery of apprenticeships.

In 2018 / 2019 we paid just over £182,000 in Apprenticeship Levies. To ensure maximum benefit and VFM from this investment back to WDH, we have expanded our Apprenticeship Programme, taking on office-based apprentices, and increased learning and development within the existing workforce through the introduction of a new apprentice ILM3 qualification.

We continue to support the Girls in Construction campaign working with local schools to offer taster sessions to girls to encourage them to consider a career in construction and the opportunities available through our construction apprenticeships.

During 2018 / 2019 we created 12 new apprenticeship opportunities; eight construction and four office-based apprenticeships. Bringing the number of apprenticeship placements offered since 2005 to 140.

We also started recruiting a further four construction apprentices and one office apprentice, providing even more workplace opportunities for people. These began employment in August 2019.

### Leadership Extended Achievement Programme

Our Leadership Extended Achievement Programme (LEAP) initiative was launched in November 2015 and provides opportunities for employees to gain the skills and confidence to progress within the organisation, developing leaders for the future. Candidates delivered internal presentations, written reports implementing change, participated in key projects and achieved accredited qualifications.

We also delivered a Business Leaders LEAP for our aspiring directors of the future. This programme provides a range of learning and development opportunities that equip candidates with the skills to become a member of the senior management team.

- Nine employees completed LEAP during 2018 / 2019 taking the total to 30 to date. A further eight are currently on the programme.
- 18 employees secured new positions within WDH as a result.
- A further seven employees have embarked on Business Leaders LEAP.
Managing capacity is vital to any business to deliver improved VFM. We take a number of approaches to managing our capacity across the business.

Improving health and wellbeing
Managing the health and wellbeing of our employees is key to preventing and reducing absence and increasing our overall capacity.

A particular area of focus for us during 2018 / 2019 has been managing the mental health and wellbeing of employees.

Through our Health and Wellbeing Plan, developed in conjunction with our Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), providers People Asset Management and Health Assured, we implemented a number of initiatives that had a positive impact, these included:

- delivering mental health awareness training for all line managers to help them manage and support employees;
- delivering mental health first aid training to a number of employees from across the business; and
- launching our employee Wellbeing Champions.

Other initiatives delivered included:

- a wellbeing week during March 2019;
- targeted health and wellbeing events throughout the year;
- promotion of the EAP which provides confidential support to employees and their families;
- regular individual resilience training for employees; and
- our mentor programme, providing employees with access to an independent mentor to offer advice and assistance.

The safety and wellbeing of our employees and other stakeholders is key to managing absence as well as achieving high levels of employee satisfaction.

Our health and safety management systems are compliant with OHSAS 18001, the international standard for health and safety management, and we are accredited through the Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme as a principal contractor and principal designer.

We are also accredited to deliver the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health Managing Safely and Construction Industry Training Board Site Managers Safety training in-house.

We continue to deliver a range of health and safety training on an ongoing basis across our workforce to ensure health and safety is embedded throughout everything we do.

During 2018 / 2019 we increased capacity, reducing the average number of days per FTE lost to absence to 8.38 days.

We have set ourselves a new target of an average of eight days per FTE on a rolling 12 month period and remain confident that our continued efforts will see employee absence reduce further.

Improving externally funded posts and reducing core overheads
One approach we take to increasing capacity and reducing costs is to work with partners to increase the number of externally funded posts. During 2018 / 2019 the number of externally funded posts increased from 174 to 175 against our target of 179.

Employee costs make up a significant proportion of our core overheads. Externally funded posts have helped to reduce core overhead costs to 7.3% of adjusted turnover, meeting our intended target of 7.5%.

Maximising the benefits of new technology
During 2018 / 2019 we continued with our ambitious plans to implement our enterprise resource planning solution, Dynamics.

Phase 1 of the project went live in April 2019 and focused on implementation across finance, procurement, human resources and payroll.

Dynamics will provide one set of data, which will allow information to flow seamlessly through all our business processes, leading to significant efficiencies and cost savings throughout the business as a result of reduced manual intervention within processes.

Improving employee satisfaction
Maintaining and improving employee satisfaction is key to ensuring a thriving and successful business.

High levels of employee satisfaction generate VFM by reducing costs as a result of increased loyalty, retention and productivity.

During 2017 / 2018 our employee satisfaction score rose by 1.5% to 84.6% which means we remain well within the upper quartile using TLF Research's Satisfaction Index™ league table.

The next employee survey will take place during 2019 / 2020.

We have set a target to increase levels of employee satisfaction to 86.2% during 2019 / 2020.

Supporting the well-being of employees and providing opportunities for development are key to improving satisfaction. We have continued to invest in our employees and retain Investors in People accredited to Gold Status. During 2019 / 2020 we will be working towards the new Investors in People standard.
Providing sustainable living through more affordable, energy efficient and safe homes in mixed tenure communities is at the core of our ambitions.

Our New Build and Investment Plan 2017 to 2020 sets out our approach to meeting the demand for new homes and housing growth and to delivering a variety of property types and tenures to meet customer needs, local housing demands and our business aspirations.

Our Asset Management Strategic Plan 2017 to 2025 sets out how we seek to maintain and improve our assets through compliance, replacement and regeneration. This strategic plan will ensure that we offer properties that are safe, affordable, desirable and reflect the needs of customers and local housing demands.

Increasing the supply of new homes

Our development pipeline has been defined in line with an assessment of opportunities for investment within the Wakefield district and across local authority areas throughout the region.

This is consistent with our business model to increase business resilience, and support growth and VFM by investing in broader geographical areas where there is clear strategic advantage, and opportunity to create added value and increase social dividend. Diagram 5 illustrates our priority development areas.
During 2018 / 2019 we invested £29.4m, delivering 402 new homes.

Bridge Homes, our joint venture with Wakefield Council, delivered 56 new homes during the same period.

Our plans for the future are ambitious and we aim to deliver a minimum of 340 new homes during 2019 / 2020 and are looking to increase this, subject to securing new funding.

We maintain Homes England investment partner status for the Affordable Homes Programme and 106 of the 2019 / 2020 new homes will be delivered through this programme, with a further 238 in 2020 / 2021.

We are expanding our approach beyond Section 106 acquisitions to increase land-led development, working in partnership with contractors, and are becoming more proactive in promoting and acquiring land for development.

We will be setting up a new development company, which will support our ambitions in relation to the provision of new homes through direct site acquisition and development.

We have also been successful in a partnership bid with Together Housing and Accent Housing to Homes England for the ‘Wave 2’ new build programme (2022 - 2024) which has resulted in funding to enable us to deliver a further 330 homes during 2022 / 2024.

The following chart shows delivery in 2018 / 2019 and planned future development pipeline to 2021 (subject to funding).
Managing and improving our assets

Annual review of assets
We currently have a stock profile of just under 35,000 assets. This includes:

- 31,432 residential properties;
- 433 leaseholder properties;
- 2,839 garages;
- 118 commercial units; and
- 12 offices and operational sites.

Ensuring our stock is sustainable and meets changing needs and demands is important if we are to maximise the revenue we generate from them and deliver VFM.

We use this information to classify our properties using a traffic light approach or ‘RAG’ (red, amber, green) profile, to determine future investment or disinvestment plans, as well as identifying shorter term maintenance decisions.

Continued targeted investment and rationalisation of under-performing assets has improved the VFM of our stock profile over time (Graph 5).

Table 5: RAG investment needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Amber</th>
<th>Green</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Anticipated</td>
<td>High level of reinvestment needed or low demand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Location</td>
<td>Medium level of reinvestment needed to move to green.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Condition</td>
<td>Low reinvestment needed. Can be maintained with minimum intervention.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 2018 / 2019, 521 properties (1.7%) were classed as ‘red’, or unviable, meaning that they require a high level of investment to maintain them to required standards over the long-term or have a low demand. This compares to 2,372 ‘red’ properties in 2005 at transfer.

Of the 521 red properties, 173 relate to properties age, or low demand, ILSs that are no longer suitable for modern living needs and are to be demolished and replaced with much needed modern accommodation as part of the ILS Improvement Programme which continues through to 2020.

Diagram 5 illustrates the viability of our stock across various areas of the Wakefield district bands on the RAG profile.

We undertake an asset management review of all our housing stock on an annual basis to ensure they continue to deliver VFM.

The review is based on an assessment of the long-term viability and cost of maintaining and improving those assets compared to their potential to generate income. It takes into account factors such as income, anticipated demand, location, the existing condition and future investment needed to maintain the property to the required standards.

### Wakefield City
- 6,578
- 136
- 29

### Castleford and Airedale
- 4,109
- 95
- 40

### Pontefract and Knottingley
- 3,875
- 798
- 172

### Wakefield North West
- 3,536
- 74

### Wakefield North East
- 2,524
- 130
- 0

### South East
- 3,979
- 224
- 133

### Northfield and Featherstone
- 3,664
- 309
- 73

(Excludes shared ownership properties.)
Asset investment programmes

Our asset investment programmes and maintenance cycles ensure we continually improve our assets to make sure they meet relevant quality and compliance standards.

During 2018 / 2019 we spent an average of £1,489.51 per property on major works which include re-roofing and maintenance including boiler servicing. This shows an increase since 2017 / 2018 when the average spend was £1,316.61.

Investment will continue in accordance with the Asset Management Strategic Plan to maintain the highest standard possible.

Enhancing standards of compliance

Delivering the highest standards of compliance and safety across our portfolio is a key priority. Our standards focus on achieving both regulatory requirements and industry best practice to ensure the safety and well-being of our customers.

During 2018 / 2019 we focused on improvements to our high-rise buildings through the upgrade of apartment entrance doors and the certification of fire stoppage for each apartment, trialling a range of enhanced security and safety options, including the installation of a sprinkler system, at Low Cross Court, Knottingley, one of our high-rise buildings, as part of a pilot initiative.

Once completed the trial will be fully evaluated and a programme of works for the remaining eight high rise blocks will be developed for delivery over the next three years, ensuring the highest standards of safety for our tenants.

Improving energy efficiency

Reducing fuel poverty and improving the health and wellbeing of our tenants by providing warm, comfortable and energy efficient homes is a continued priority.

The energy efficiency of homes is measured through Energy Performance Certificates (see right), and the government have set targets for fuel poor homes to achieve a band D rating by 2025, with a broader ambition for all homes to be band C by 2035. We are aiming for all of our properties to achieve a D rating, where possible by 2020, five years ahead of the government target. Our focused approach will enable prioritisation of the least energy efficient properties, providing an effective method for improving VFM for tenants and generating a social return, addressing fuel poverty and reducing impact on the environment.

We continue to improve the energy efficiency of our properties through our ongoing advanced retrofit programme. During 2018 / 2019 we completed 699 energy efficiency measures in our properties and will continue with our programme during 2019 / 2020.

In addition to improving our properties, we also provided energy and water efficiency and switching advice to customers through one-to-one tenant visits, attendance at five events across the Wakefield district and provision of training on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and switching to employees.

Our tailored approach to supporting our tenants, providing advice on energy efficiency and switching suppliers, provides VFM as it supports our customers, helps them to sustain their tenancies and helps to maintain our assets.

Case study

External funding to fight fuel poverty

During 2018 / 2019 we were awarded nearly £1m of external funding to support our ambitions to alleviate fuel poverty and improve the energy performance of our properties.

This includes:

- £700,000 from the Warm Homes Fund to switch 350 of our properties from electric to gas heating, providing tenants in those properties with central heating for the first time; and

- £250,000 to trial hybrid storage systems, including battery storage technology in 18 homes, in partnership with Leeds Beckett University.
Tenant satisfaction with the quality of homes

Ensuring tenants remain satisfied with their homes is an important element of delivering value for money. Continued investment in assets helps to ensure levels of satisfaction are maintained.

Our 2019 Tenant Survey showed that 89.1% of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of their home. This was slight reduction on the 2017 / 2018 result of 90.4%, due to more people saying that they were neither satisfied or dissatisfied; dissatisfaction reduced to 3.6% (2017 / 2018: 7%). We expect our 2018 / 2019 performance continue to demonstrate median quartile performance when compared to others.

### Performance Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>2017 / 2018 Annual HouseMark Data</th>
<th>WDH 2017 / 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with quality of home.</td>
<td>90.40%</td>
<td>89.1% (actual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per property of major works and cyclical maintenance.</td>
<td>£1,159.52</td>
<td>£1,489.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average SAP (energy efficiency) rating.</td>
<td>72.13</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Major works and cyclical maintenance benchmarking

Reducing void properties to minimise income loss

Our Homesearch and Technical Services teams constantly seek to speed up the turnaround of void properties.

These teams have helped to develop a more efficient way of working and have facilitated development of a new voids letting standard, which reduces the number of follow on repairs once the tenancy has started, providing VFM and improved customer satisfaction.

The average time to re-let properties (core lettings) was 18 days during 2018 / 2019 and we expect this to remain in the median quartile when compared to others. The cost per property of lettings has increased slightly to £39.71, and is expected to remain in the upper quartile.

### Performance Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>2017 / 2018 Annual HouseMark Data</th>
<th>WDH 2017 / 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost per property of lettings.</td>
<td>£56.18</td>
<td>£39.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average re-let time in days (core lettings).</td>
<td>17.45</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Void rent loss as percentage of rent due.</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Lettings benchmarking
We focus on delivering services that provide a positive social return while meeting the needs and expectations of our customers and local community. Our Estate Management and Lettings Plan 2017 - 2020 sets out our aim to deliver a high quality estate management and lettings service that meets the current and future expectations and aspirations of our customers by creating confident communities where people want to live and stay. The plan shows how we will respond to the changing and challenging environment by continuing to offer a range of flexible, customer focused services to improve satisfaction and create sustainable tenancies which results in more secure income for the business. Our Debt, Tenancy Ready and Cash Wise teams actively support tenants on a range of matters to help them maintain successful tenancies.

Customer Perspective

Creating sustainable tenancies

Supporting tenants to manage their tenancies

Debt Team and rent arrears

The introduction of UC full service in Wakefield, increases in living costs and the four-year benefit freeze has resulted in more pressure on peoples' finances and growing poverty and hardship for people both in and out of work. Our Debt, Cash Wise and Tenancy Ready teams continue to support tenants with financial issues and budgeting. We also continue to enhance our mobile working platform and introduce new business processes to improve productivity and maximise the percentage of rent we collect.

We continue to take positive action to help tenants remain in their own home and, feel supported and in control of their finances without the need for formal legal action. Within existing resources, we have provided additional support to tenants, increasing visits by 15% and phone contact by 2.5% year on year. We received over 2,000 UC claim notifications through the UC Landlord Portal during the year and have supported tenants' UC claims by verifying their rental charges online and offering help and advice.

To further help and support customers we delivered £604,000 in Discretionary Housing Payments and a further £86,000 through our robust partnership with the Yorkshire Water Community Trust.

Our proactive approach to income management and supporting our tenants has continued to provide positive outcomes resulting in:

• 305 less notices for possession served;
• 22% reduction in the number of possession orders granted;
• 13% reduction in the number of actual evictions, generating a non-cashable return of £73,000;
• increasing customer satisfaction that rents offer VFM to 89% in 2018 / 2019 from 87.8% in 2017 / 2018; and
• being nominated for the national Housing 24 Welfare Wise Award 2018.

Our Central Debt Team has continued to improve the service it delivers by:

• conducting quality assurance framework checks for both visiting officers and office-based staff to ensure excellence and continuous improvement;
• introducing digital verification of Housing Benefit and UC documentation using tablet / secure email functionality;
• implementing a co-ordinated, business wide response to the challenges of UC, including providing additional front-line resources specifically relating to the new benefit;
• providing a full communications campaign in relation to UC for tenants, including a UC animation and talking heads videos;
• integrating the DWP landlord portal into our existing processes to identify tenants claiming UC at the earliest opportunity;
• ensuring early intervention by debt officers for tenants claiming UC to support tenant health and wellbeing, tenancy sustainment and to mitigate impacts on rent arrears; and
• becoming a trusted landlord with the DWP and further developing our partnership working with the DWP at a local, regional and national level.
Case study
Debt Team supporting tenant health and wellbeing.

Ensuring excellent performance in relation to income management, supporting tenant health and wellbeing and ensuring tenancy sustainment is at the heart of what our Debt Team does. Often this requires joint working with teams across WDH and external partnership working with Wakefield Council, the DWP and other local stakeholders. This can include accessing grant funding from numerous benevolent funds to help our tenants with financial issues.

During the last year, the team supported a young gentleman who was the sole tenant of a one bedroom flat in Wakefield. The tenant had previously served in the armed forces. Due to issues with unstable employment and illness, the tenant had fallen into significant rent arrears and risked losing his home.

In addition to making a referral to our Cash Wise and Wellbeing teams to provide additional support, the debt officer helped the tenant to make a grant application to the SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity. The SSAFA grant cleared the tenants rent arrears and helped him to get back on track during a challenging time in his life. The tenant is now paying his rent regularly, is secure in his home and is able to be more actively involved in his local community, free from the burden of debt.

We continue to improve productivity through robust performance monitoring and play a key role in the Northern Rents Benchmarking Group, benchmarking our debt performance against similar organisations, whilst also benchmarking our performance nationally through HouseMark.

The efficiency of debt collection is demonstrated by upper quartile performance for the cost per property of rent arrears and collection at 98.60%.

Current arrears, as a percentage of rent due, increased marginally to 3.1% at the year end. Performance in relation to current arrears reflects an optimum balance between the level of resources required to manage and recover debt and support tenants to manage their finances to tackle financial exclusion and sustain tenancies.

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<tr>
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<td>Median</td>
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<td>Cost per property of rent arrears and collection.</td>
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<td>(excluding voids).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of rent collected (excluding current arrears brought forward).</td>
<td>101.04%</td>
<td>99.95%</td>
<td>99.32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Former tenant rent arrears as percentage of rent due (excluding voids).</td>
<td>0.76%</td>
<td>1.49%</td>
<td>2.01%</td>
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Table 8: Rent arrears and collection benchmarking
Tenancy Ready Team

The Tenancy Ready Team is a small team dedicated to work with vulnerable applicants and tenants to help them to access and successfully maintain a tenancy with us. The team support individuals with a range of issues including tenancy applications and access to benefits.

In 2018 / 2019 the team:

• unlocked £551,000 worth of income for tenants through assistance with UC, maximising customer income and obtaining goods and grants to help new tenants furnish their homes;
• conducted 2,249 pre tenancy assessments to gather information about prospective tenants to ensure the right property is allocated to the right person and they are able to successfully sustain their tenancy;
• supported 86 customers with UC;
• provided support to customers with other needs, such as assisted bidding on a weekly basis to vulnerable Homesearch members who, for a variety of reasons, cannot access Homesearch themselves; and
• supported 20 customers by delivering a ‘ready for tenancy’ course alongside Wakefield Council’s Adult Education service to give customers the necessary skills to manage and successfully maintain a tenancy as well as furthering the customers’ prospects by improving their social mobility.

Case study

Tenancy Ready Team provides extra help

A customer applying for independent living was referred to the Tenancy Ready Team, after it was identified during the pre-tenancy assessment that they would require additional support in setting up their tenancy.

The customer suffered with many health conditions including autism and had barriers to learning. He had lived in his previous property for many years; a home that was co-owned with a sibling who had been taken into full time care.

The officer assigned to support the customer made all the necessary applications for housing benefit and council tax support and set up direct debits for their rent payment. In addition to this, the officer contacted the customer’s utility supplier and arranged for a smart meter to be installed at the property.

Once settled into his new accommodation, the customer began to interact with other residents in the ILS and started to attend coffee mornings, something which he may not have felt confident enough to do before.

The customer’s sister said, “Having support from the Tenancy Ready Team has been a real asset and the move may not have taken place without the additional support”.

Amy Baker, Homesearch Officer, said: “Due to the nature of the customer’s health conditions and learning difficulties he was always going to find moving home a difficult and daunting experience. I ensured I made the transition as seamless as possible and that the outcome was a positive one”.

Cash Wise

Cash Wise have continued to provide invaluable assistance to customers who are struggling to manage their money and sustain their tenancy. Since inception the team has supported over 6,000 cases to overcome a wide range of financial challenges that impact on both tenancy sustainment and the wellbeing of our customers.

Throughout the 2018 / 2019 financial year Cash Wise supported 1,840 people to get back on track with their finances and be better able to participate in society. This is the highest annual total to date since 2013. As part of the support provided by Cash Wise, the team unlocked over £1.6m in grants and unclaimed benefits to improve the financial position of our customers.

UC full service rolled out across the Wakefield district on 28 November 2018 and significantly impacted on a number of our customers. Since that time the team has provided essential support to struggling customers to apply for the new benefit and navigate the digital based platform.

All of the 1,932 customers who moved onto UC across the 2018 / 2019 financial year received Cash Wise contact within 48 hours of being notified of their claim. Assistance was provided in the form of office-based phone support, home visits and UC drop in sessions at our service access points and Jobcentres to help with this transition. A series of short video clips and an animation to help people to better understand the recent changes were produced and made available on the Cash Wise website and our Facebook pages as part of our preparations for UC.

With an expected 150% increase in WDH customers claiming UC across the financial year ahead, district wide Cash Wise support will be on hand to ensure our customers can maximise their income and budget their money as effectively as possible.
Maintaining a good quality neighbourhood environment

Estate management services

We generate VFM through our excellent estate management services which contribute to creating confident communities where people want to live and stay.

Our 2017 / 2018 review of the estate management service examined how our services are cost efficient and effective in meeting current and future customer expectations ensuring assets are protected and improving the community environment.

During 2018 / 2019 we have continued to implement the action plan arising from the review. The Estates Team aim to be visible on our estates and be a recognisable presence to engage with and support our communities. The team carry out street audits to identify any areas that require improvements, this may be new fencing or the installation of driveways and off-street parking, or it may be as small as clearing an overgrown area.

By consulting with tenants and our Neighbourhood Panels, areas that require environmental improvements can be identified. Following our procurement framework, estates teams ensure they achieve value for money by gaining the best quotes for the work or by using our dedicated internal landscaping and tree teams. By improving the environment in which our tenants live, our properties are more desirable and people want to live and stay in the area, creating sustainable tenancies and reducing tenancy turnover.

The level of satisfaction with neighbourhoods had been fairly consistent over previous years, with almost 90% of our tenants either satisfied or very satisfied with their neighbourhoods as a place to live (Graph 7). Our 2019 Tenant Survey showed satisfaction decreased slightly to 85% in 2018 / 2019, reflecting an increase in people expressing that they were neither satisfied or dissatisfied and we are analysing the reasons for this. At the lower end of the satisfaction scale, overall dissatisfaction reduced, from 7.6% to 6.5%.

Case study

Peacock Estate, Wakefield

Peacock Estate in Wakefield has 433 properties and is a mixture of owner occupiers (29%) and WDH properties (71%).

Fencing had been previously provided to the majority of properties during a programme in the early to mid 1980s. This had now reached the end of its lifespan with the fence panels and posts becoming rotten and sections needing to be removed, increasing the time and money needed to complete the necessary repairs. The area had been identified for environmental improvement work from capital funding, but due to the cost it became apparent that this improvement work would not take place for several years. Residents and Neighbourhood Panel members expressed the need for investment into the look of the estate and the added security of having improved boundary fencing.

Plans were developed with the Training for Employment Team to replace front boundary fencing including front dividing fencing and gates where required. Due to the number of properties involved the estate was split into four phases and individual consultations took place with the residents. Owner-occupiers were also asked if they wanted to buy into the service and several have taken up the opportunity and have had fencing erected.

The Training for Employment environmental assistants began work in October 2017 and the scheme is due for completion late 2019. Altogether 32 environmental assistants have been involved in the project to date, who have gained skills to take them onto further employment.

The impact on the area has been quite dramatic and has improved the appearance of the estate. Overall satisfaction is high and the scheme has been hugely successful. Chris Croxall, Tenant Involvement Officer, said “The fencing improvements have made a massive impact on Peacock by enhancing the appearance of the estate and enabling us to talk to residents who we have not previously engaged with”.

“...It was perfect service thank you very much.”
Managing antisocial behaviour

Ensuring that tenants and residents feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods is a very important part of our work to create confident communities.

We have a robust approach to managing antisocial behaviour (ASB) and nuisance behaviour and work closely with our partner agencies, which include the Police and Wakefield Council, to deal with issues through a combination of support, diversion or enforcement.

Our dedicated Community Safety Team specialises in managing ASB and funds additional support including five seconded police constables and five police community support officers (PCSOs).

During 2018 / 2019 we:

- worked closely with West Yorkshire Police to address problems caused by illegal use of motorbikes within WDH neighbourhoods;
- provided personal and tenancy management support to 128 tenants who had experienced domestic abuse to ensure they remained safe and able to successfully sustain their tenancy;
- provided additional support to West Yorkshire Police to enable increased visibility and neighbourhood policing on the Warwick estate, Knottingley to help deal with residents concerns over increasing levels of antisocial and criminal behaviour. This has resulted in a growing community confidence and lower levels of crime and nuisance behaviour being reported to both agencies; and
- delivered classroom sessions to 11 schools in our neighbourhood areas to raise awareness over the ‘risks and consequences’ of ASB and to help promote positive behaviour.

The level of investment we make in managing ASB reflects the priority our tenants place on it, identified in feedback and knowledge of Wakefield’s crime and participation in the Wakefield Together community safety partnership. Costs per property of managing ASB increased slightly to £44.04 in 2018 / 2019.

We gather feedback from those reporting complaints of ASB to us and closely monitor levels of satisfaction in order to ensure the services we provide continue to meet the needs of tenants.

In 2018 / 2019, we contacted 1,597 tenants who had reported an ASB complaint to us. Of the 904 tenants providing feedback to us, 81% (729) were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled and 78% (704) were satisfied with their final outcome. Whilst the overall results showed a decrease on 2017 / 2018 satisfaction levels, positive changes made during 2018 / 2019 to the way we gather this information increased the number of complainants providing feedback to us which impacted on the overall results.

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Percentage of respondents very or fairly satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was handled. | 88.42% 84.80% 69.98% 93.0% | Upper 81% | 84.80% 69.98% 93.0% | Upper 81%
Percentage of respondents very or fairly satisfied with the final outcome of their ASB complaint. | 87.90% 75.50% 61.37% 94.0% | Upper 78% | 75.50% 61.37% 94.0% | Upper 78%
Cost per property of ASB. | £43.35 £60.75 £75.45 £41.64 | Upper £44.04 | £41.64 | £44.04

Table 9: ASB benchmarking

Case study

Effective partnership working to make roads safer

During 2018 / 2019 we supported the West Yorkshire Police bike team with cash investment to enable them to operate seven days a week.

The funds helped to buy two new Honda CR250f off road motorbikes providing capability for each of Wakefield’s three Neighbourhood Police Teams (NPTs) to have two dedicated off-road officers.

The bikes provide the district with its best off-road capability. The team has three police officers and three Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), making West Yorkshire Police one of the first UK police forces to deploy PCSOs in this way.

Inspector Martin Moizer of the Wakefield North East NPT, said: “These changes make a real difference to our off-road capability significantly enhancing what is already a major asset for our district.”

He added: “We work in partnership with WDH to reduce anti-social behaviour on estates and the off-road team have played a significant role in deterring off road related anti-social behaviour.”
Providing wider investment in local communities supports the development of sustainable communities, contributes to sustainable tenancies and promotes the well-being of our tenants. This is key to our Vision. Part of the social dividend created is re-invested in much needed local services.

**Providing support to community projects**

We continue to support a wide range of community projects through our Community Grant Scheme, which provides up to £1,500 in grants for local community and voluntary groups looking to fund a project. Since the scheme was established in 2005, we have provided over £250,000 to help over 200 local groups.

In 2018 / 2019 we awarded £15,288 in grants to community groups.

Grants awarded include:

- £851 for new costumes and props to Love2Act drama club based at the Phoenix Centre in Alverthorpe, providing drama sessions and workshops to children and young people aged four to 14;
- £1,276 to iSpace, a community group based in Wakefield, to buy iPads for the children to carry out research, share their learning, create blogs and promote upcoming projects;
- £500 for equipment to Aces Disability Group, a social support group for adults with disabilities based in Havercroft;
- £1,500 for equipment to Jesters Sports Acro, a gymnastics, acrobatics and tumbling group for children age five and up based in Featherstone; and
- £1,499 to Friends of Airedale Library to provide equipment and materials for community events within the library.
Supporting people into employment

We continue to deliver a number of services and programmes to support tenants into employment.

Community Employment Advisors

Our Community Employment Advisors work to help job seekers overcome barriers to work. Over the past nine years, we have helped over 2,300 tenants and their families into employment.

In the last year our advisors held over 350 open work clubs which were accessed over 1,500 times. With many individuals being further away from the job market, our Social Inclusion Team worked with partners to deliver 13 pop-up events to connect with more ‘hard to reach’ customers.

During 2018 / 2019 we engaged with 434 new customers, supporting 229 into work and helping 179 to find training opportunities. Customers value the service and advisors receive on average four compliments every month.

“Couldn’t have been any improvement today, very satisfied, very efficient, very thorough, thank you.”

Training for Employment Programme

The programme provides paid employment for unemployed tenants and their families for up to a year, mainly in environmental and caretaking roles. It is structured to provide employability skills that will help them to move into further employment at the end of the programme. Since 2015, 126 people have been employed on the programme with 63% of them moving into further employment.

Foundation Grant Scheme

Our Foundation Grant Scheme provides grants for tenants to help them enhance their individual development.

The aim of the scheme is to make a real difference to individuals in our communities by helping with educational support or help to further their career or employment opportunities. Funding can be used in a variety of ways, for example to fund a college or training course or to pay for childcare whilst in college.

In recognition of the value the scheme provides to tenants, the maximum individual grant value was increased in January 2019 from £500 to £3,000.

In 2018 / 2019 we provided a total of £13,903 of funding, to support 33 individuals which included:

• £6,638 to courses requiring the use of a CSCS card, such as New Road and Street Works Act courses, Security Industry Authority licenses and fork lift truck courses;

• £315 for medical related courses; and

• £840 for barbering courses.

Case study

Training for Employment

Michael had been unemployed for 10 months and was feeling despondent and discouraged. He wanted to get back into employment, but the only work Michael could find was intermittent. The lack of dependable work was impacting on family life.

He was drawn to the Training For Employment Programme as it offered six months of continual employment with support and opportunity. Along with being able to pay his rent, he hoped that it could give him back some confidence and pride.

He attended a recruitment assessment day and interview and was successful, gaining a place on a four week Sector Based Work Academy at Wakefield College, undertaking a number of courses and a Customer Service qualification. After successfully completing the Academy Michael was offered a six-month employment contract on our Training for Employment programme.

Michael learned many new skills including fence erecting and environmental improvements. He also had the opportunity to work alongside electricians, developing his labouring skills and electrical knowledge.

Whilst on the programme Michael applied for a permanent position with WDH. The Training for Employment Team provided support with his application and interview preparation.

He successfully gained the permanent position.
Supporting young people in our communities

We continue to deliver a number of services and programmes to support young people in our local communities

Community Leadership Programme
Since its creation in 2006, our flagship Community Leadership Programme has helped over 1,500 young people to develop in areas such as confidence, teamwork and communication, which are essential for them as they move towards the world of work. In 2018 / 2019, 50 young people from three local high schools attended the week-long residential programme in the Lake District.

Initiatives to inspire and mentor
During 2018 / 2019 we continued to deliver a number of other initiatives to support young people across our local communities including:

• supporting the Wakefield launch of Primary Futures, a national innovative approach to helping schools raise the future aspirations of primary age children and boost social mobility, through inspirational events and activities. Our colleagues participated in 18 events in schools across the district to bring learning to life and help over 1,500 children to see the relevance of their learning and how this opens possibilities for them in later life; and

• 12 mentors from WDH enabled The Diana Award to deliver four Diana Mentoring programmes in three secondary schools to over 100 young people across the district. The 12-week programme promotes citizenship through a youth led social action project, improves work place readiness as well as building character, determination and resilience.

Case study
When Dance Happens
When Dance Happens is a joint dance project between WDH, Arts Council England and Castleford Academy which is being delivered to children in Castleford. Through participating in the program young people develop their confidence levels, interpersonal skills, team and independent work as well as achieving different levels of Arts Council Awards. The dance element is delivered by Freedom 2 Dance, a Castleford based dance organisation.

The programme allows young people to work with National Portfolio Organisations (including the Northern Ballet, Phoenix Dance, Royal Ballet and the Northern School of Contemporary Dance) which creates clear pathways in to dance activities for young people, enabling them to further explore the art of dance for enjoyment, education or career purposes. To date a total of 428 pupils have taken part in the project, 229 girls and 199 boys. The dance leaders have delivered over 76 sessions in schools, participated in a cheer dance competition at Blackpool Tower, attended two dance theatre performances, completed two Explorer Awards as well as running after school clubs in hip hop and cheer dance.

When Dance Happens - Explorer Award participants said:
“When I stepped out into the Tower ballroom I was overwhelmed, the atmosphere was incredible.”
“It was an amazing experience.”
Improving health and wellbeing across our communities

An important part of our approach to maintaining sustainable tenancies is working to support and improve the health and wellbeing of our tenants across our local communities. We continue to provide a number of services and initiatives in partnership with health and social care partners to maximise the benefits to our tenants and improve value for money.

Connecting Care+ and new models of care

We are a member of the Connecting Care+ Partnership working with health and social care and the voluntary and community sector across the Wakefield District.

The partnership enables us to work together in delivering appropriate services to our tenants who are experiencing ill health and social concerns and ensures our services are integral to health and social care interventions provided to those that need support.

Our focus remains on the redesign of health and social care services to provide integrated community-based alternatives.

Our approach to early intervention and the right support at the right time has proved to be a great success with 96% of clients reporting a positive outcome in improving their health and wellbeing.

The partnership continues to be successful and is evidenced by the number of New Models of Care projects established in 2018. Some of these projects come as a result of our evaluation and becoming a partner of choice on prevention technologies.

Wellbeing Caseworkers and Mental Health Navigators

Our Wellbeing Caseworkers and Mental Health Navigators co-located with partner agencies within Connecting Care+ Hubs across Wakefield, supported 910 clients throughout 2018 / 2019 to improve their wellbeing.

As part of our continued partnership with health and social care during 2018 / 2019 we developed a number of new models of care. These include:

• Two housing co-ordinator posts located in Fieldhead and Pinderfields hospitals providing early support to patients in order to help facilitate an effective and timely discharge from hospital. During 2018 / 2019 135 clients were supported by the housing co-ordinators.

• Telemedicine which has been introduced into the New Priory extra care scheme in Featherstone. The service provides a secure video link to give tenants and employees in the scheme immediate access to a ‘hub’ of senior nurses, based within the hospital, who can monitor medical conditions on screen and provide 24 hour advice and support.

By using this technology, with its single point of access to expert opinion, diagnosis and support, it is hoped that GP call-outs, hospital admissions, A&E attendances, and primary care visits will all be reduced.

• Carers Support which is a new partnership between WDH and Wakefield Council launched during 2018 / 2019 to provide support to carers in the district.

The partnership will provide 200 identified carers in the district with telecare services for a three-month period, during which they will experience the benefits of our Care Link service and how it can help to support them with their caring responsibilities.

“They were very, very pleasant and they dealt with me very efficiently, so I am quite pleased thank you.”
Supporting people to live independently

Ensuring tenants can safely access their homes and facilities within their homes to help them sustain their tenancy remains a priority. We are committed to providing our tenants with a service that supports them to live independently and safely.

Care Link

Our Care Link telecare and responder service uses technology to provide individually tailored support to individuals so they are able to remain independent in their own homes.

The service continues to support over 15,000 customers with over 3,000 of these also in receipt of our responder service. We have also been successful in achieving a 5.5% increase in the number of private customers receiving the Care Link service.

During 2018 / 2019 the service dealt with 341,296 calls into our call centre and attended 2,077 falls in customers’ homes reducing the need for an ambulance call and ultimately creating cost savings to the NHS.

Satisfaction with the service remains high with 90% of customers satisfied with the overall service in 2018 / 2019. Withdrawal of housing support funding by Wakefield Council in 2018 resulted in increased costs for a number of our customers, having an impact on the perception of VFM. To address this, we recently held a VFM focus group with customers and have produced an action plan to help address any concerns raised.

Independent living schemes

Our 36 ILSs located across the Wakefield district make the perfect home for those who need extra help and support, providing independent living whilst offering safety and peace of mind through extra help for tenants when they need it.

During 2018 / 2019 we continued to deliver our 10 year ILS Improvement Programme, investing £5.8m to refurbish and redevelop a number of ILSs across the district, including: Baileygate Court, Pontefract; Springhills, Outwood; Musgrave Court, Lupset; and Farfield Court, South Elmsall.

Satisfaction with our schemes continues to remain high, confirming that the services provided are well received and meeting tenant needs. In our 2018 / 2019 survey, residents living in our ILSs gave us an average score of 9 out of ten for overall satisfaction.

Occupational therapy and adaptations

Our Housing Adaptations Team provides support and assistance for tenants who are having difficulties moving around their home as a result of medical conditions or disabilities and require adaptations to help them live independently.

During 2018 / 2019 the team:

• completed 892 assessments for adaptations;
• provided 1,745 adaptations, ranging from minor adaptations such as hand rails, to more major adaptations such as stairlifts;
• completed 329 assessments for people who requested rehousing on medical grounds; and
• undertook 111 accompanied viewings to ensure that accommodation meets an individual’s needs.

We are committed to providing our tenants with a service that supports them to live independently and safely in their homes and our current satisfaction score of 98% indicates that the service is well received and meeting tenant needs.

“The service I got was excellent, nothing that could be done to be improved. Excellent thank you.”
Ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction

Our customers are at the heart of all of our services. We develop and improve services with genuine customer input, by seeking out best practice and innovation in other sectors, and by inviting external scrutiny and challenge.

In June 2018 we were accredited with the Customer Service Excellence standard. We were recognised as delivering Compliance Plus status across 10 areas of the criteria, recognising that we are delivering services over and above what customers would normally expect, including our Housing Support Co-ordinators and Community Anchors.

Our annual tenant survey continues to show high levels of satisfaction across a number of areas.

Overall tenant satisfaction

Overall tenant satisfaction increased to 87.9% in 2018 / 2019 from 85.3% in 2017 / 2018. Comparison against other housing associations and the wider business community using TLF Research’s methodology shows top quartile performance.

Satisfaction with the VFM of rents

Tenant satisfaction that rents provide VFM increased to 89% in 2018 / 2019 from 88% in 2017 / 2018. Based on the benchmarking results for 2017 / 2018, this would be median performance in the HouseMark benchmarking.

Table 10: Customer service priorities

We use the results from our Tenant Survey to ensure that we improve the overall customer experience and we do best at what matters most to our tenants and customers. Table 10 shows our customer service priorities for improving VFM and the progress made during 2018 / 2019.

Our 2019 Tenant Survey showed that two of the targets for 2018 / 2019 were not achieved with outturn performance for the year decreasing compared to the previous year. Analysis is being undertaken to understand the reasons for this and to identify future action to improve performance in these areas. Ease of doing business with us continues to show positive improvement, exceeding target.

Graph 8: Tenant satisfaction with WDH

Graph 9: Satisfaction with VFM of rent

Keeping promises and commitments

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How easy we are to do business with

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<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Outturn</td>
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Managing nuisance and ASB

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<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Outturn</td>
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<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>67%</td>
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What we have done to improve during 2018 / 2019

- Ensured that customer service leadership is embedded in all our employees by providing tools and training.
- Reviewed our Customer Charter in line with our tenants’ expectations.
- Investigated reasons for service failures and identified trends in customer contact.
- Reviewed the user interface of the digital repairs process.
- Explored options for launching a webchat function.
- Introduced a ‘sole focus’ voids team to improve the customer experience and ultimately reduce the number of repairs reported by new tenants.
- Explored options for journey mapping the customer experience when reporting nuisance or ASB.
- Developed automated messages to keep customers updated when they report nuisance or ASB using an online method.

Table 10: Customer service priorities
Satisfaction with our repairs service

Our focus is on providing a high quality, efficient and low cost repairs service, and we continue to perform well in this area.

During 2018 / 2019:

- we completed 105,267 responsive repairs;
- the average number of calendar days taken to complete repairs remained low at six days;
- 93% of repairs were completed at the first visit;
- our tenant survey showed satisfaction with repairs was 89.1%. This is a slight decrease on the 2017 / 2018 result, overall dissatisfaction remained extremely low at 4.6% (2017 / 2018: 4.8%); and
- the cost per property for repairs was £441 increasing slightly from £410.25 in 2017 / 2018.

Benchmarking through HouseMark shows strong performance within our repairs service compared to others. Performance is likely to remain upper or median quartile based on 2017 / 2018 HouseMark benchmarking comparisons.

Graph 10: Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance

"Highly satisfied with the work that’s been done, thank you very much.”

Table 11: Repairs service benchmarking
Responding to customer feedback

We use the Bright UK ‘voice of the customer’ system to gather realtime feedback from customers about the quality of service provided by our Technical Services and OneCALL contact centre teams.

We include specific questions, informed by customer insight, relating to understanding, knowledge, ownership, helpfulness, general satisfaction, customer effort, speed and quality of work.

Our overall satisfaction score stands at 92% in 2018 / 2019 compared with a UK national average of 85%.

Our aim is to resolve customer concerns before they lead to complaints, which are more costly to resolve. Our informal complaints process seeks to resolve minor complaints on first contact, preventing them escalating and resulting in cost savings.

Our Complaints and Compensation Policy focuses on achieving a prompt resolution and best use of resources, to ensure we achieve VFM. Complaints provide us with an opportunity to learn and improve. Complaint outcomes drive improvements to our services and policies and procedures so we can deliver a better service to our customers.

During 2018 / 2019 the number of complaints entering the formal complaints process decreased to 30 compared to 36 in 2017 / 2018 (see graph 12).

A total of 23 complaints were resolved at Stage 1 and seven escalated to Stage 2. Of the formal complaints dealt with, 16 (53%) were upheld or partially upheld.

Over the year the Housing Ombudsman Service investigated four complaints which were referred to them for consideration. In all cases, the Ombudsman concluded there had been no maladministration.
Commercial Perspective

Creating sustainable growth

Focusing on generating efficiencies and cost savings across the business is key to creating sustainable growth and grow the social dividend reinvested for the benefit of our tenants and our communities. Being a sustainable and responsible business through managing our impact on the environment and continuing to reduce our carbon footprint is integral to our approach.

Generating efficiency savings

In 2018 / 2019 we delivered £459,000 of cashable efficiency savings. By realising these cashable efficiencies we have reduced our operating costs, which in turn results in a positive contribution to our social dividend which is reinvested for the benefit of our tenants and our communities.
VFM through being a digital business

Being a digital business and enabling customers to maximise their digital opportunities is one of our core ambitions and essential to how we operate if we are to remain competitive in coming years.

By enhancing our online and mobile channels, improving our internal business applications and supporting tenants to get online and go digital, we will enable substantial improvements in productivity and customer service, making an important and positive contribution to improved VFM across all of our services.

During 2018 / 2019 we continued with our ambitious plans to implement our enterprise resource planning solution, Dynamics, going live within our finance, procurement, HR and payroll functions in April 2019. Further improvements to the Phase 1 roll out are planned for 2019 / 2020.

We continue to develop our digital customer contact offer as part of our overall approach to improving customer experience, making it easier for those tenants who prefer to communicate and transact with us digitally, to do so.

Our digital achievements during 2018 / 2019 include:

- We launched our tenant app with a range of new features.
- Over 3,000 people downloaded the app taking the total to 10,116 downloads.
- 40% of all contacts with our OneCALL customer service team were made digitally.
- We launched our noise nuisance app for tenants, reducing the cost of capturing evidence in noise nuisance cases.
- We launched our new Sharepoint-based Employee Hub to replace the Intranet.

Table 12: Digital achievements

VFM through procurement

Ensuring VFM through procurement of goods and services is a key area of focus.

Our rigorous approach to purchasing and tendering, along with processes for monitoring the contracts we have in place with external suppliers, ensures that we secure VFM across the range of goods and services we procure.

The introduction of a new purchase to pay solution coupled with a renewed emphasis on effective contract management across all of our externally delivered contracts, will enable us to manage supplier performance and ensure VFM is maximised. We will influence where possible the value of local supply chains as well as improve contributions to our local communities by way of tangible social value.

During 2018 / 2019 we spent £27.2m with local suppliers across the Wakefield district.

We have delivered a number of efficiencies through procurement during 2018 / 2019 including those below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>During 2018 / 2019 we</th>
<th>How has this improved VFM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-let the waste management contract.</td>
<td>Efficiency savings of £25,000 are expected to be generated year on year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-procured mobile device tariffs.</td>
<td>The new contract has achieved savings through a reduction in tariff costs and benefits in an increased equipment credit. Efficiency savings of £40,000 are expected to be generated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved our corporate fuel card provider.</td>
<td>The new contract has achieved savings through switching providers from the Shell List to Platts Plus deal. Efficiency savings of £12,000 are expected to be generated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed a new unlicensed asbestos removal contract.</td>
<td>This has moved previously 'off-contract spend' on to a corporate contract through Efficiency North. Efficiency savings of £187,000 are expected to be generated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Procurement achievements

Case study

The recent re-procurement of our waste management tender ensured that, throughout the term of the new contract, the provider consciously looked to recruit locally and where possible provide work experience for NEETs (not in education, employment or training). The provider also promoted opportunities for those who are employed under our agreement to access training opportunities where possible.

Case study

Working closely with our ILS catering contractor, Elior, and through good contract management we were able to actively pursue the original contract’s aspirations in seeking meaningful and tangible social value goals. A young lady who has cerebral palsy worked with our provider over a six week voluntary work experience placement as part of her college studies. Through this experience and hard work, she was successfully taken on as a paid casual member of staff, working three days a week.

“I was extremely satisfied with everything thank you very much. The fellow was really polite and really quick very thorough. He showed me exactly what he had done and I couldn’t wish for anything more, thank you.”
Minimising overhead costs

Ensuring low overhead costs is important to us in continuing to maintain and improve VFM from our services. These costs form part of our overall operating costs, which, if reduced, results in a positive contribution to our social dividend that is reinvested for the benefit of our tenants and our communities.

Benchmarking continues to demonstrate that our total overhead costs as a percentage of adjusted turnover is low in comparison to others. In 2018 / 2019 this was 7.3%. Performance is likely to remain comfortably within upper quartile.

Performance within the specific areas of central and other overheads, finance, and IT and communications are also expected to remain within upper quartile, and overhead costs for premises median quartile.

Generating returns from our commercial operations

Northern Shared Services cost sharing group

Northern Shared Services (NSS) is a cost sharing group (CSG) established by WDH in partnership with Together Housing and Arches Housing Association, which enables cost savings to be made in relation to repairs and maintenance of over 13,000 NSS properties across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

NSS made a direct £591,000 contribution towards our fixed costs. This is marginally less than 2017 / 2018 and reflects lower spending by the CSG in response to member organisations’ wishes to reduce activity as a result of concerns regarding the pending HMRC decision the tax advantages of CSGs.

WDH Solutions

Our commercial subsidiary WDH Solutions provides a repairs and maintenance service to a number of external customers, predominantly outside the housing sector, including a number of schools across the Wakefield district.

In the school summer holidays of 2018 WDH Solutions competitively tendered for, won and successfully delivered a major refurbishment and improvement project to three schools within the Pontefract Academies Trust. The works included replacing external windows and doors, replacing internal fire doors, electrical alterations and full redecoration works, the project was completed in five weeks and had a value of £472,000.

The subsidiary makes an important contribution to our social dividend. During 2018 / 2019 WDH Solutions generated a turnover of £1.029m contributing a profit of £21,000.

Bridge Homes

Bridge Homes is the joint venture between WDH and Wakefield Council, to increase the supply of new build properties. During 2018 / 2019 this delivered 56 homes and generated a turnover of £9.2m.

Case study

WDH Solutions

Debbie Samwell, director of finance, business and operations at the trust said; “We believe that well maintained and attractive school environments have a positive impact on student engagement and achievement. WDH Schools Solutions have worked on a number of refurbishment projects for the trust over recent years and have consistently completed work on time, within budget and to high standards.”
Improving sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint

Being a sustainable and responsible business is at the heart of our services. We are proud to retain our certification against ISO 14001 which demonstrates how we are continuing to consider our impact on the environment and how we generate VFM through continuous improvement in the way we manage this.

We continue to build on our success in this area, and have implemented a number of further initiatives including those in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 / 2019</th>
<th>How This Has Improved VFM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2018 - implemented a sustainable travel policy.</td>
<td>The policy ensures that we are actively facilitating and promoting sustainable travel options and choices for our employees and customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2018 - extended our pool car scheme across the business.</td>
<td>Following a successful trial, a fleet of seven vehicles are now available for business journeys from three locations, with more than 180 employees now signed up to the scheme. The scheme helps to: • lower carbon emissions through car sharing; and • reduce costs of mileage claims from employees using their own cars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2018 - installed a solar panel system at our Merefield House offices.</td>
<td>The 500 solar panels are estimated to: • generate savings in electricity costs of more than £12,000 per annum; and • reduce our carbon footprint by around 1,000 tonnes over the lifetime of the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2018 - training in waste management best practice.</td>
<td>Approximately 200 trade operatives received waste management training to ensure best practice and to maximise recycling rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2019 - reduced the impact of our painting programme.</td>
<td>In partnership with our painting supplier, we donated more than 500 litres of paint to charity and now have processes in place to recycle empty paint cans, avoiding the creation and cost of waste within the business.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: Sustainability achievements

As a result of these and other initiatives we reduced our carbon footprint by 8.9% during 2018 / 2019, resulting in a 17.2% reduction against the 2014 / 2015 baseline, and exceeding our target to achieve a 10% reduction by 2020 a year in advance.

Case study

Sustainability Officer for WDH said: “At WDH we had a generous amount of paint just sitting in the store room which had been left over from previous jobs. By donating it to the scheme in Selby it has helped reduce our waste, contributed towards our aim of reducing our carbon footprint and helped others. The scheme makes paint available for individuals and groups to purchase for £1-2 per litre (on average 75% cheaper than the recommended retail price).”
Improving VFM in 2019 / 2020

The cumulative impact of year-on-year reductions in rent, coupled with unavoidable cost pressures and the impact of reductions in public services and welfare reform, require a further step change in how we deliver VFM to achieve our ambitions.

The next year marks a crucial transition phase as we prepare for the future. This will involve continued significant investment in new technology to enable us to deliver our ambitions for digital connectivity, which will transform how we work and the way we work with and deliver services to our customers.

Our Business Strategy, ‘Delivering the Vision’, sets out how we intend to achieve our ambitions and the ways we will secure funding and direct resources and savings to achieve them.

Attention is now focused on our next milestone for 2020:

‘To be an enterprise with social impacts.’

Our overall growth outcome for 2019 / 2020 is to secure sustainable growth, generating a social dividend of over £71m.

If we are to achieve this, it is essential that we continue to focus on improving VFM and delivering intended efficiencies.

VFM is at the core of everything we do. To ensure continued focus on VFM we consider each of our ambitions set out in our Business Strategy from a VFM perspective and utilise a number of indicators across the business which help us measure progress.

Our approach will help to ensure we deliver the maximum value to our tenants and other stakeholders and achieve our overall growth outcomes, whilst achieving year on year improvements in economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Diagram 7 (page 78) summarises the key actions we will take during 2019 / 2020 and our intended outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Our Ambitions to 2020</th>
<th>Business and VFM Outcomes to 2025</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be a positive force of leadership and influence to develop the potential of people.</td>
<td>Sustainable Workforce: Maintain business overheads below 7.5% of turnover.</td>
<td>Sustainable Workforce: Maintain business overheads below 7.5% of turnover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be a partner of choice to create better places to live.</td>
<td>Connected Workforce: Over 50% of training courses delivered digitally.</td>
<td>Connected Workforce: Over 50% of training courses delivered digitally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be a landlord of choice by putting the customer first.</td>
<td>Sustainable Homes: 100% of safety inspections completed.</td>
<td>Sustainable Homes: 100% of safety inspections completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To adopt best practice in good governance.</td>
<td>Sustainable Communities: Maintain tenancy turnover below 7.5%.</td>
<td>Sustainable Communities: Maintain tenancy turnover below 7.5%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connected Communities: Increase digital contacts to over 50%.</td>
<td>Connected Communities: Increase digital contacts to over 50%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Business: Deliver efficiency savings of over £250,000.</td>
<td>Sustainable Business: Deliver efficiency savings of over £250,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connected Business: Develop one new joint venture.</td>
<td>Connected Business: Develop one new joint venture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: Key ambitions and intended business outcomes

Our Corporate Management Team and Board will monitor the above throughout the year, alongside a suite of key performance measures which will ensure that the organisation’s viability and operational performance are maintained and enhanced.

Key Actions 2019
- Mitigate impact of Universal Credit upon customers
- Implement the Out of District Offer
- Maximise investment from external sources to develop and grow social investment
- Work with partners in the integrated care system to deliver new models of care and support

Key Actions 2019
- Implement Dynamics asset management module
- Develop collaborative working tools
- Continue to develop plan for digital blueprint
- Review customer contact technologies

Key Actions 2019
- Review Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Implement strategic workforce plan
- Review approach to attraction, recruitment and retention
- Deliver leadership capability and succession opportunities

Key Actions 2019
- Develop pipeline for future years growth
- Publish extended Landlord’s Assurance Statement
- Develop prudent ‘plus’ approach to Capital Programme
- Create development company

Opportunities for All
- Maximize opportunities for our people and those who want to work for us.

Building Better Places
- Invest in more new homes and land to meet the growing need for affordable housing and become a leading regional housing provider.

A Digital Future
- Be a digital business, and enable our customers to maximise their digital opportunities.

Delivering Customer Excellence
- Create excellent customer experience by offering a range of services that maximise choice, opportunity, health and wellbeing.

Diagram 8: 2020 Business Strategy
**Vision**
to create confident communities

**Mission**
to inspire, transform and promote excellence

**Values**
to be creative, inclusive and work with integrity