



2023

CUSTOMER
ANNUAL REPORT

Because Community Matters

“Hello and welcome

For those Customers who may not know me yet, I'm Places for People's Chief Operating Officer. I've been in this role for the past 12 months, but I've worked for Places for People for three years. One of my main, and most important, responsibilities is to make sure our homes and Communities are meeting all our Customers' needs. That includes reviewing our performance, identifying what we're doing well, and how we can improve.



Throughout 2022/23, there have been many challenges, including the cost-of-living crisis. This has had a huge impact on Customers' lives and it's been our priority to try and tackle this. In response, we launched a Cost-of-Living Taskforce to deliver a range of support measures, including a **£715,000 Cost of Living Fund**. Benefiting hundreds of Customers, this funding has provided rent relief and vouchers for essentials such as food and fuel.

Alongside this fund, several other initiatives have been rolled out to extend our support through the crisis, all of which you can read about in this report.

Making sure Customers benefit from the right support would not be possible without your input. That's why our Customer groups are so important. These provide an opportunity for you to have a say on the issues that matter the most.

The National Customer Group (NCG) is one example and has continued to play a vital role in influencing and improving your services in 2022/23. On page **04**, Chair Janet Boston will tell you more about the NCG's fantastic work and the progress that's been made.

If you're interested in making a positive difference and would like to join the NCG or any of our other Customer groups, we'd love to hear from you. You can find out how on page 04.

In terms of our performance, you will see a slight change to the way the key performance indicators (KPIs) are reported this year. That's because **Chorus Homes, Cotman and Derwent Living** are now all part of **Places for People**. Bringing these housing providers under one brand will ensure consistent services, standards and processes across our organisation, improving the experience for all Customers.

You will also see that demand for our repairs service increased significantly in 2022/23. This trend coincided with several challenges affecting the whole housing sector, including rising inflation, higher material costs, and labour shortages.

We're taking several steps to address this situation. We've launched a recruitment campaign for around **100** more tradespeople and are trialling video technology to speed up the repairs process.

We're equipping our Colleagues with more resources too. This includes a new **£4m** fund for implementing tools, measures or equipment that address local needs.

There is, however, always room to do more and this will be a key focus in 2023/24. We're introducing a new set of standards, designed to significantly improve the quality of our existing homes and services. We're also developing regional teams who will be much closer to Customers. This will enable us to gain a greater understanding of local needs and mean more of our Colleagues are on hand to help in your Communities.

I'm looking forward to working with my team to make these improvements while supporting our Customers, ensuring everything we do will make your Community thrive.

Because Community Matters.

Scott Black
Chief Operating Officer

Customer engagement

Listening to our Customers is so important. We need your insights and views so we can act on what we hear and improve the services we provide to you.

We engage with our Customers in various ways and continue to create opportunities for you to have your say. Our National Customer Group (NCG) is a key example, ensuring we can get to know our Customers and enhance their experience.

Made up of nine Customers from across the UK, the NCG is playing a key role in influencing key issues, policies and services. In the past year, the group has met quarterly with the Places for People board, sharing Customers' views directly with the leadership team, including the chief executive. "Through this process, the NCG

scrutinises our performance and the services we are delivering and provide feedbacks on matters affecting Customers and their homes."

**A message from Janet Boston,
Chair of the NCG**

"The NCG brings People together who all have different backgrounds, experiences and skills to share. It's this diversity which makes the group so successful. There is such a wide spectrum of experience around the table relating to housing, Customer service and different Communities and places. This means we can all learn so much from each other, share ideas, and have broad discussions which are driving positive change.

"The opportunity to meet with members of the Places for People board has made a significant impact too. We know we're being listened to, and the leadership team values our opinions both as a group and individually.

"On behalf of the NCG, we look forward to continuing to represent our Customers' voices as we take the next steps on our journey. As Customers ourselves, we are here to help others and make sure everyone benefits from our work."

How to get involved

There are so many ways you can help to improve and influence our work at Places for People. By volunteering, you can make your voice heard, get the chance to meet other Customers, develop your skills, and make a positive difference.

To find out more about the national and local groups you can join at Places or People please visit:

**[www.placesforpeople.co.uk/
about-us/community/customer-
voice](http://www.placesforpeople.co.uk/about-us/community/customer-voice)**

or call 01772 667002

Places Impact

We carried out a survey to better understand the support you need with the Cost-of-Living. The results highlighted that energy advice, support with food, and wellbeing activities were top priorities.

In response, we launched a **£715,000** Cost-of-Living Fund, offering rent relief and vouchers to help Customers with essentials such as food, energy and fuel.

We have also backed more than **100** charities offering vital assistance such as food and baby banks in local Communities.

We formed a new partnership with National Energy Action, a charity working to end fuel poverty in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This means specialist energy advisors are on hand to assist Customers with reducing energy debt.

We also launched a furniture initiative to help new and existing Customers, which has seen us provide essential items such as beds, whites goods and carpets to more than 330 People.

Improving wellbeing

We have launched a National Wellbeing project which includes a dedicated team to offer tailored advice and signpost Customers to a variety of local services. You can speak to a team member at any time over the phone to receive help on a variety of areas.

Keeping connected

We have introduced Community Connectors, these are Places for People Colleagues who are working with Customers to get clearer insights into what your local Community wants and needs. Their role also involves building partnerships with local organisations and groups.

A total of six Community Connectors are now in post and a variety of activities have been launched, including coffee mornings, a careers event for local schools, and a Community gathering to celebrate Ramadan.

Projects in your Community

The results of our Customer survey have helped to shape a wide variety of projects in Communities right across the UK. From activities for young People through to fitness classes, online training and financial advice, there are lots of initiatives available.

You can find out more about the work done by our Places Impact team by visiting:

**[www.placesforpeople.co.uk/
communityprojects](http://www.placesforpeople.co.uk/communityprojects)**



Places Impact

PERFORMANCE KPIS

Number of People helped who were homeless or at risk of being homeless

10,539

Number of People supported into education, employment or training

3,796

Number of People supported with financial inclusion including money advice and hardship funds

6,654

Number of People supported through projects targeting health and wellbeing

23,539

Number of People supported through projects targeting sustainable resilient Communities

18,198

Social value generated for our Customers and Communities

£272m



Our service to you

In the past year (2022/23), we've been working hard to get our repair service back on track. We understand that it's been tough to get repairs done quickly, and we understand Customers' frustrations. But here's the good news: we're making big changes to improve how we handle repairs. We want to diagnose them more accurately, make repairs faster, and keep you informed every step of the way.

Customer satisfaction

All Areas

Customer Satisfaction

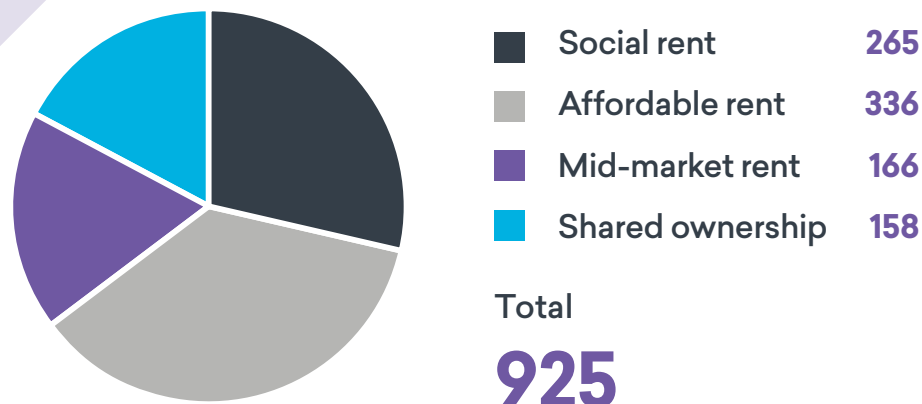
80.94%

Next year, we will be introducing Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These measurements aim to hold housing providers accountable for the quality of housing and services they provide while giving Customers greater visibility of their performance against sector standards.

Our transformation plan includes new systems and better connections in your local Community.

You might be a Customer of Places for People, Living Plus or Places for People Scotland depending on where you live or the type of service you receive. This report shows combined figures for Places for People, Living Plus and Places for People Scotland together.

Key statistics – New homes built in 22/23





Customer service requests

All Areas

Average Time to Answer Calls (minutes)

5

Average Response to E-mails (days)

1.5

Average Live Chat Response Times (minutes)

3

Calls Answered against calls received

76.57%

Complaints

All Areas

Complaints that were fully upheld

41%

Stage 1 complaints answered within timescale

75%

Complaints about repairs

70%

Stage 2 complaints answered within timescale

84%



Through our Cost of Living Taskforce, we have supported over **6,600** Customers with money advice or vouchers for food and fuel. Last winter, we supported **40** warm spaces and a network of **114** foodbanks who provide essentials for Customers and Communities. There are over **100** local and national projects available for Customers and Communities which cover themes including wellbeing, employment, training, getting online and financial inclusion.

We are here to support you during these challenging times. For more information please visit www.placesforpeople.co.uk/costofliving



Your Tenancy and Community

All Areas

Rent arrears as a % of total rent due

4.66%

Total losses from empty homes

1.49%

Average days taken to relet empty properties

38

Number of serious ASB cases managed

183

Serious ASB cases that were responded to within one working day

96.72%

Tenant who were happy with the way their ASB cases were handled

54.96%



Your Home

All Areas

Customer satisfaction with our repairs and maintenance service

86.3%

Routine repairs responded to in time

50.52%

Investment in maintaining our homes

£66.7m

Homes with gas safety certificates

99.41%

Planned investment for 23/24

£76.9m

Communal areas with fire risk assessments

98.72%

Repairs completed right first time

89.5%



If you need information about your home,
such as how to report a repair, money advice
or wellbeing support — please get in touch
with us and we will help you. Visit our website

www.placesforpeople.co.uk

