



Chesterfield Borough Council Housing Services

# Annual Report

September 2013







Chesterfield Borough Council  
Housing Services

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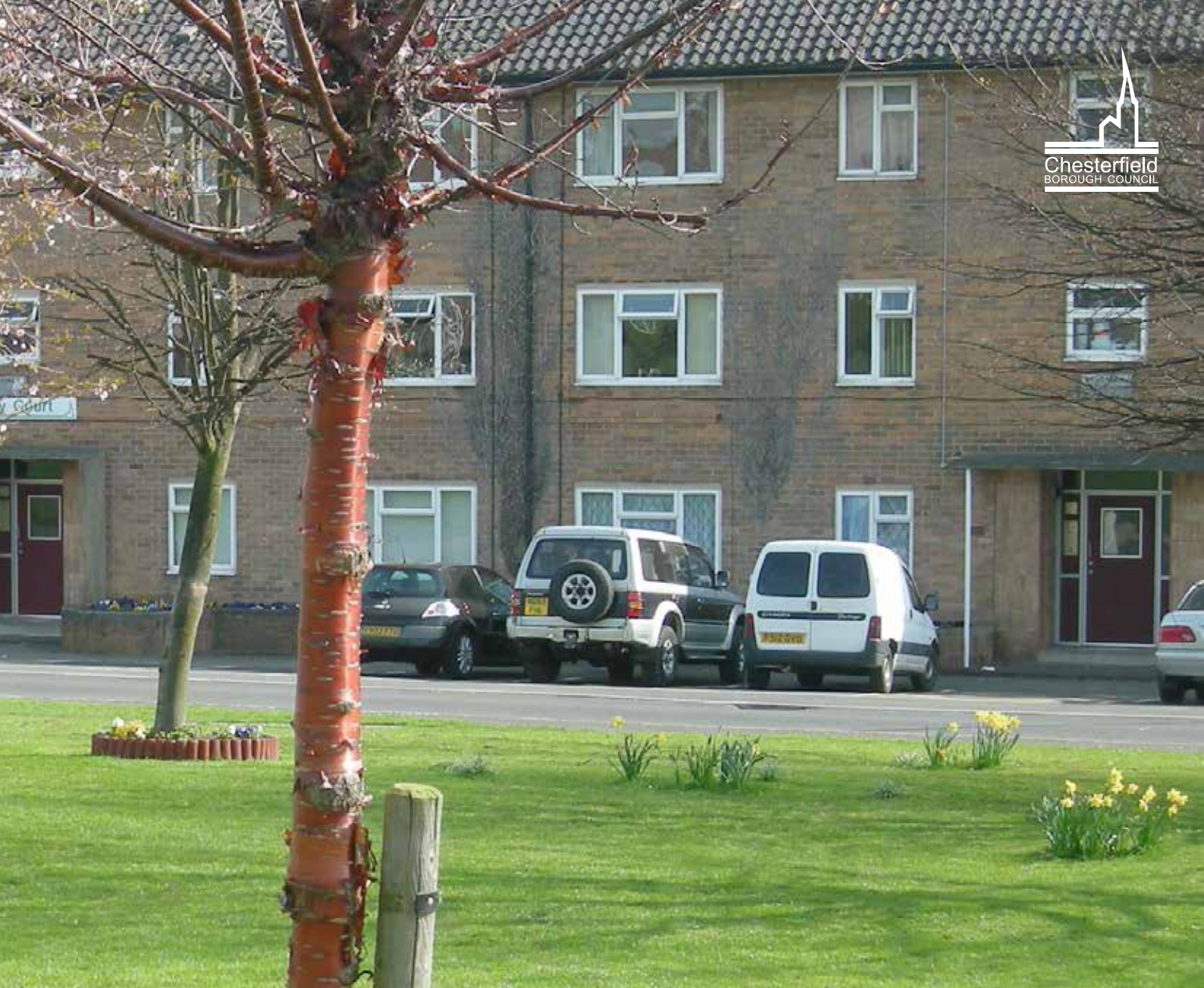
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# Welcome



**We would like to welcome you to Chesterfield Borough Council's Annual Report which was prepared by Housing Services in partnership with tenants.**

Chesterfield Borough Council is committed to customer involvement. Customers are at the heart of all services and integral to decision making. It is only through customers' input, views, challenge and support that we can continue to develop and improve services.

The report is divided into colour coded sections that reflect the social housing regulator's standards.

We hope that you find the Report useful and interesting. Please complete the short survey at the end of the report to let us have your comments and any suggestions on how it could be improved.

I would like to thank the tenants for once again working with the Borough Council to improve our Housing Services and producing this Report.

It is vital that we are accountable to our tenants and we depend on your continued feedback to achieve this. I would also like to thank all our staff in Housing Services who once again have delivered all that was asked of them.

**Councillor McManus**  
Executive Member for Housing

## Who is this from?

Your landlord, Chesterfield Borough Council, has produced this report.

You can contact us at:

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Rose Hill  
Chesterfield  
S40 1LP

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Email: **[jayne.yates@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.yates@chesterfield.gov.uk)**



# Core values



**Our objectives have been shaped through consultation with our customers, through findings and recommendations provided by external inspections and through identifying key priorities for contributing to the Community Strategy and Chesterfield's Housing Strategy.**

**Our key objectives are to:**

- Achieve, as a minimum, the Decent Homes Standard for all Council properties by 2015
- Increase tenant satisfaction and opportunities for involvement in decision-making
- Ensure residents can enjoy their homes and communities without the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Provide a high quality housing management service, in terms of cost, efficiency and service delivery
- Provide a high performing, cost effective repairs and maintenance service
- Deliver services fairly and recognise equality of opportunity and choice

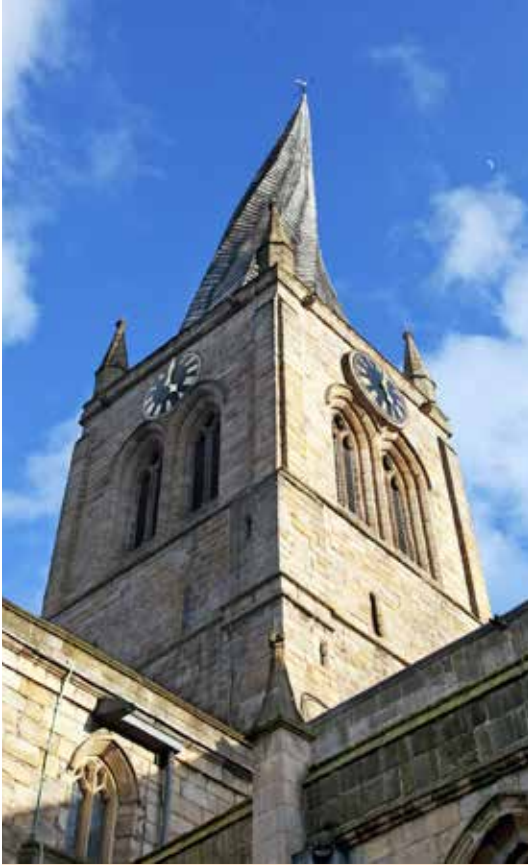
The mission for the Chesterfield's Housing Service is:

***'Creating Sustainable and Accessible Communities – where people are proud to live now and aspire to live in the future'***

Our vision is:

***'We will work together with our residents and partners to create fair access to high quality, sustainable, decent and affordable homes and communities.'***

# Key Service Standards



**We are committed to delivering excellent services to all of our customers and aim to continuously improve.**

## Our Key Service Standards are to:

- Make safe all emergency repairs within 24 hours and complete a full repair within five days, dependant on the type of repair required and availability of specialist parts
- Complete all urgent repairs within five working days
- Complete all routine responsive repairs within 20 working days
- Attend all appointments made for responsive repairs where access into your home is required
- Answer all telephone calls within 20 seconds
- Respond to all answer phone messages within one working day (24 hours)
- Reply to all letters within 20 working days (full response)
- Respond to complaints within 15 working days (full response)
- Acknowledge all emails within one working day and give a full response within 15 working days
- Ensure all properties let meet Chesterfield's Lettable Standard
- Respond to all serious ASB or hate crime reports within one working day (24 hours) and all other cases of anti social behaviour within five working days
- Always wear identification badges and show them to customers when we meet them.







# Introduction



**Chesterfield Borough Council's Housing Service is responsible for the day-to-day management and repair of over 9,600 houses, flats, maisonettes and bungalows across 24 estates. It is also responsible for planned maintenance and improvement and modernisation programmes to meet targets set by the Government under the Decent Homes Standard.**

**We have asked our tenants about what matters most to them and they said:**

- Repairs and maintenance and the overall quality of your home
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour and your neighbourhood as a place to live
- Value for money for your rent
- Keeping tenants informed and taking tenants views into account

**We are already tackling these issues.**

**This year we have:**

- Introduced iHome, a smartphone application for Chesterfield tenants
- Spent the Estate Improvement Budget in consultation with Area Panels
- Introduced the Tenant Challenge Panel to deliver tenant scrutiny
- Increased the Capital Improvement Programme to £18.6m
- Implemented changes to the Allocation Policy to assist households affected by the welfare reform changes



- Proactively assisted households to move to more suitable and affordable properties
- Continued working towards meeting all the requirements of the Respect ASB Charter for Housing by becoming involved in diversionary schemes that are aimed at preventing ASB
- Continued to work closely with the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Teams
- Retained the Derbyshire Support and Accommodation Team's Contract for the Floating Support Service and restructured the service to provide an enhanced support and response service
- Replace the district heating system at Barrow Hill
- Introduce a self-referral process for some minor adaptations
- Help households who want to move who are affected by welfare reform
- Work in partnership to reduce rough sleeping and homelessness
- Reduce the number of days taken to resolve ASB cases
- Introduce an ASB contract between ourselves and people who report ASB
- Seek opportunities for projects that improve the environment, particularly those that help inter-generational understanding and provide a focus for residents to engage with other residents
- Increase awareness of the health and environmental costs of dog fouling

#### In the year ahead we are planning to:

- Improve how we track complaints
- Establish a programme of regular mystery shopping exercises to test services
- Use the mobile office to increase local involvement of tenants
- Offer repair appointments on Saturday afternoons

You will find more details of these plans inside this report.





# How well are we doing?



To ensure that the services we deliver are efficient, effective and meet the needs and demands of our tenants, we constantly monitor how we are doing in all our service areas.

We monitor our performance through performance indicators which cover a range of housing services. We also measure customer satisfaction performance as this tells us which service areas are most important to you. We use this feedback, along with further consultation, to make improvements.

We 'benchmark' performance information which means that we compare ourselves to other organisations. Benchmarking helps us to understand performance and costs so that we can improve the quality and value for money of the services that we deliver to you.

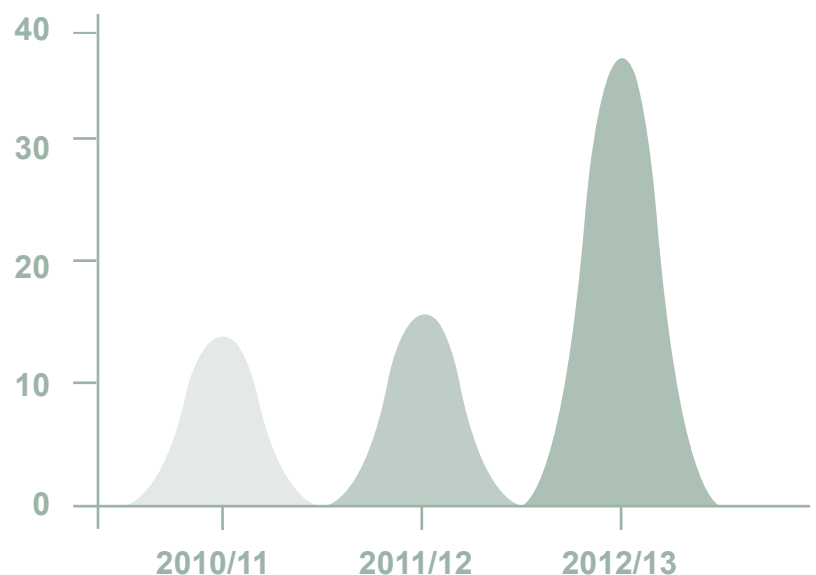
HouseMark is a subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Housing Federation. We use HouseMark to compare ourselves with over 970 other members including local authorities, ALMOs, housing associations and housing co-operatives.

This report is a true picture of how Housing Services are performing against the social housing regulator's standards. It tells you about what the Council have been doing and what it is going to do to make services better.

The report tells you how we have performed from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

Number of homes we own and manage as at 31 March 2013 – 9657

## Homes sold





# How well are we doing on tenant involvement and customer care?



**We are committed to delivering excellent services to all of our customers and aim to continuously improve. Tenant involvement is at the heart of all that we do.**

## Where appropriate, we consult tenants on:

- Any decision we make which will affect your home or neighbourhood
- How we monitor services and improvement plans
- How our services can be improved
- Estate improvement projects

Tenants are the people best placed to tell us about the services that they want to receive. Tenants give us their views through surveys, meetings, focus groups, service review groups, feedback and complaints.

We encourage all tenants to tell us how they want to be involved and what they want to be included in. We have structures in place to enable you to participate at whatever level you choose.

## Local Offers

Local offers are service standards or targets for improvement. They help us to deliver services to address local issues and in a way that is more flexible to meet particular needs.





In February 2013 we held our Local Offers event at the Winding Wheel. Tenants took part in 'speed-dating' style workshops to tell us their views on services. Our Services for Vulnerable People Team also held coffee mornings in our sheltered schemes to consult tenants.

Previously our Local Offers focused on service standards to improve performance across the service. We are looking forward to focussing more on service improvements in 2013/14. Tenants have told us which Local Offers they would like us to introduce so that we can add something extra or improve our services in an efficient, cost effective manner.

We will measure our performance against the local offers and tell you how we are doing in future Annual Reports.

We are normally available from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday. The phone lines are open at these times with an out-of-hours emergency service for repairs. You can email us at any time. (Please note some offices are closed until 10.00am on Wednesdays for training.)

#### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Introduced iHome, a smartphone application for Chesterfield tenants to access Housing Services
- Spent the Estate Improvement Budget in consultation with Area Panels to give tenants a real say in how we improve neighbourhoods
- Introduced the Tenant Challenge Panel to deliver tenant scrutiny in line with guidance from the social housing regulator
- Appointed an additional Tenant Participation Officer to support the Tenant Challenge Panel
- Increased the number of tenants who are actively involved in tenant participation activities through Area Panels, Tenant Executive and Tenant Challenge Panel
- Provided appropriate training opportunities to assist tenant representatives to be effective in their roles
- Introduced a mobile office enabling more consultation to be done locally
- Established a Tenant Resource Centre
- Refocused Local Offers on to service improvements

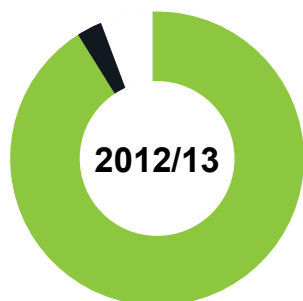


iHome is a smartphone application that gives you access to information and services via your mobile telephone. It is free to download from iTunes or Google Play Shop and can be used to:

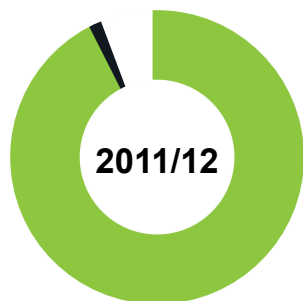
- report repairs and neighbourhood issues
- request a direct debit form
- set rent reminders
- calculate your living costs
- calculate if your home is under occupied
- keep up-to-date with our latest news and events
- access useful contacts

Customer feedback is used to improve the services that we provide to you. A centralised electronic system is used to record complaints, letters and enquiries. Our performance in dealing with electronic enquiries remains high, well above the Council’s Customer Charter target. Our performance on responding to complaints is slightly below the Council’s Customer Charter target of 94%. To improve our methods of tracking complaints we are investigating the feasibility of using an IT system that is linked to the housing management system.

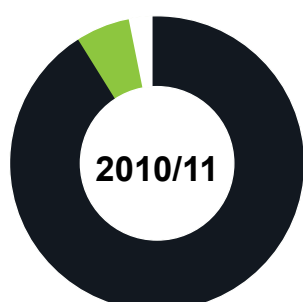
**Letters responded to within 20 working days**



<b>Performance</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>94%</b>
Target met	✗
Improved	✗



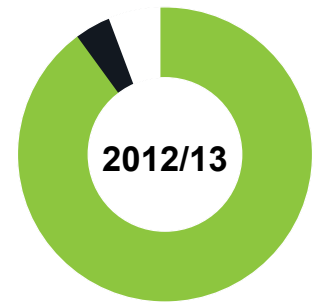
<b>Performance</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>94%</b>
Target met	✗
Improved	✗



<b>Performance</b>	<b>97.73%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>94%</b>
Target met	✓
Improved	✗

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 94%.

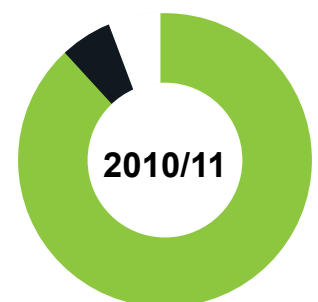
**Complaints responded to within 15 working days**



<b>Performance</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>94%</b>
Target met	✗
Improved	✗



<b>Performance</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>94%</b>
Target met	✗
Improved	✓

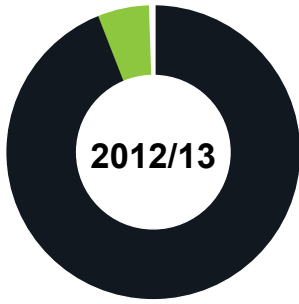


<b>Performance</b>	<b>88.05%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>94%</b>
Target met	✗
Improved	✗

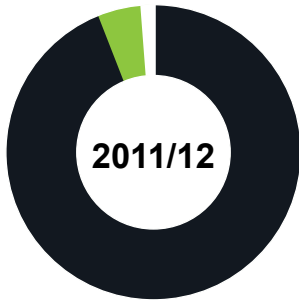
We have set our target for 2013/14 at 94%. This is the target set by the Council’s Customer Charter.



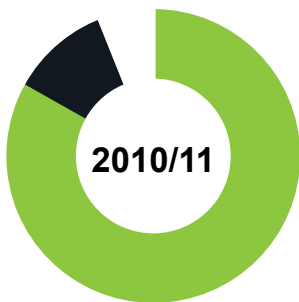
**Electronic enquiries responded to within 20 working days**



Performance	99.3%
Target	94%
Target met	✓
Improved	✓



Performance	98.2%
Target	94%
Target met	✓
Improved	✓



Performance	88.33%
Target	94%
Target met	✗
Improved	✗

**Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:**

- To improve our methods of tracking complaints by investigating the feasibility of using an IT system that is linked to our housing management system.
- To increase the effectiveness of Area Panels
- To establish a programme of regular mystery shopping exercises to test services received by customers. Information obtained during the exercises will be used to improve services.
- To provide appropriate training for our tenant representatives to be more effective in their role
- To develop the role of tenant forums for minority groups
- To use the mobile office to increase local involvement of tenants
- To use Facebook to introduce social media to Housing Services
- To increase the number of tenants using iHome



We have set our target for 2013/14 at 94%. This is the target set by the Council's Customer Charter.



## How well are we doing on maintaining your home?



**It is a Government requirement that all our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard. This means that homes must be warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities.**

To ensure that as many homes as possible meet the standard in Chesterfield we have continued to carry out work to the worst properties first.

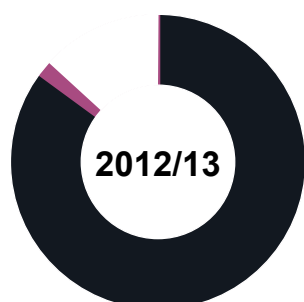
We have installed solar panels on 383 Council housing roofs. Whilst the tenants of these particular properties are benefitting from cheaper electricity bills, they are also generating an income for the Council from the Government's 'Feed in Tariff'. We will use this income to provide other energy efficiency measures in the remainder of the housing stock.

We have externally insulated and rendered 406 'non-traditional' properties at Grangewood to ensure that they are warmer. We plan to insulate a further 119 properties at Mastin Moor in the next 12 months and to draw up plans to continue to insulate similar homes in other areas.

**We will continue to carry out surveys of our housing stock to ascertain:**

- what work is required to ensure it meets and continues to meet the Decent Homes Standard
- what specific work may be required to our 'non-traditional housing' stock in the future to ensure they remain structurally sound
- what work may be required to the common parts of our blocks of flats to minimise the risk of fire

## The number of homes that meet the Government's Decent Home Standard as a percentage of our total housing stock

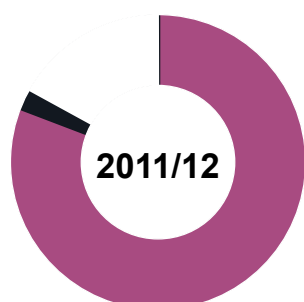


**Performance** 85.3%

**Target** 85%

**Target met** ✓

**Improved** ✓

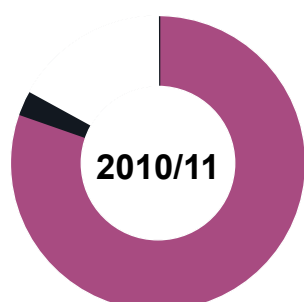


**Performance** 80.8%

**Target** 83%

**Target met** ✗

**Improved** ✓



**Performance** 80.2%

**Target** 83%

**Target met** ✗

**Improved** ✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 90%

We aim to provide you with a good quality repairs service at all times. This is being achieved as evidenced in the performance levels and tenant satisfaction in this section.

The Council is responsible for the majority of repairs to your home. We aim to keep your home structurally sound, in a decent condition and containing suitable systems to keep it adequately heated. We ask that you take care of your home and repair any damage caused by you, your household or visitors. We also ask that you carry out certain small repairs such as filling minor decorative cracks.

If you need to report a repair, you can do so by contacting the Repair Hotline on freephone **0800 587 5659** during office hours. You can request a repair at any time using the Council's website at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk) and clicking on the 'Request It' link, by following the online instructions on the Homes section of our website at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk), or by emailing [repair.requests@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:repair.requests@chesterfield.gov.uk).

To help tenants who work irregular hours or who are normally out during the day to plan for their repairs to be carried out, we offer an appointment for most repairs. The appointment will be for either the morning or afternoon on the day of your choice. Evening and Saturday appointments are available. Your appointment will be confirmed by a repair receipt, which will be sent to you through the post. We will also send a text message to your mobile, or a voicemail message to your landline, to remind you.

Making appointments reduces the number of occasions where tenants do not know when we will call. It will also avoid us having to make a second visit if you are out when we call.

We give every repair a category and target timescale.



The Council operates an out-of-hours emergency system to deal with genuine emergencies that might arise outside normal working hours. To report an emergency repair, outside office hours or at the weekend, ring our emergency number 01246 345041.

It is a legal requirement for the Council to carry out yearly checks on gas systems. If access is not given to us, we must take legal action to allow us to do so.

### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Procured a new IT system. The new system will improve the service we provide to tenants and improve monitoring and reporting of performance by using up-to-date technological innovation
- Increased the Capital Improvement Programme to £18.6m including Decent Homes money
- Continued to meet and discuss topical repairs issues with the Repairs Focus Group
- Tenant representatives have continued to inspect a sample of empty properties before they are relet to assess them against our Lettable Standard
- Reviewed performance targets to link to a Best Value Review of value for money

#### Priority: Emergency

**Target:** Attend within one hour  
Make safe within 24 hours  
Complete within five working days

**Repair Examples:** Burst pipes, gas leaks, blocked toilets or drains, dangerous electrical wiring, no heating, no hot water, no lights

#### Priority: Urgent

**Target:** Complete within five working days

**Repair Examples:** Overflow running, toilet leaks, faulty light switches, sockets, repairs to heating, door locks

#### Priority: Priority

**Target:** Complete within 15 working days

**Repair Examples:** Repairs which are not classed as urgent but are considered to be more immediate than routine

#### Priority: Routine

**Target:** Complete within 20 working days

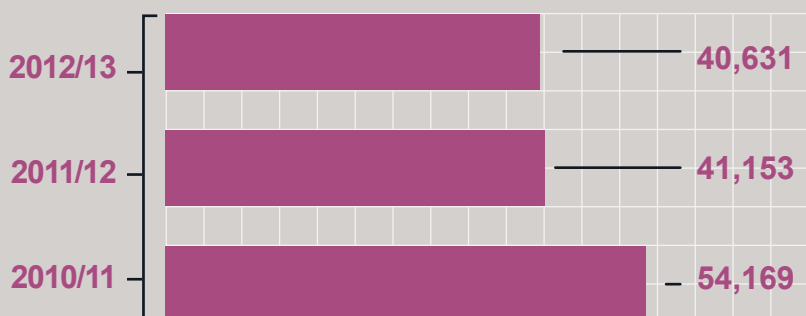
**Repair Examples:** Things that we must put right that do not cause a risk to your health and safety

#### Priority: Programmed

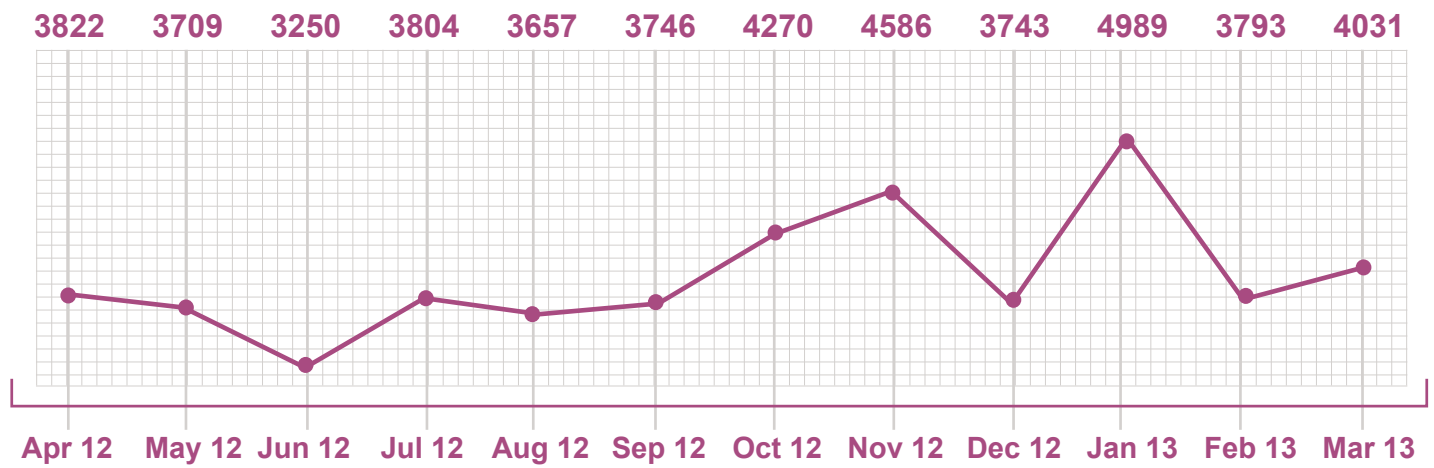
**Target:** Some non-urgent repairs are best carried out by doing the same type of work to several properties

**Repair Examples:** UPVC windows, fencing, paths

### Number of calls answered by the Repairs Hotline

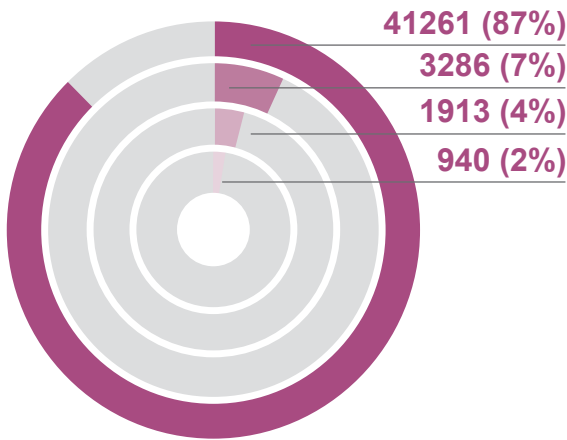


### Number of responsive repairs



### Repairs by Priority Category

- Routine
- Urgent
- Emergency
- Out of hours

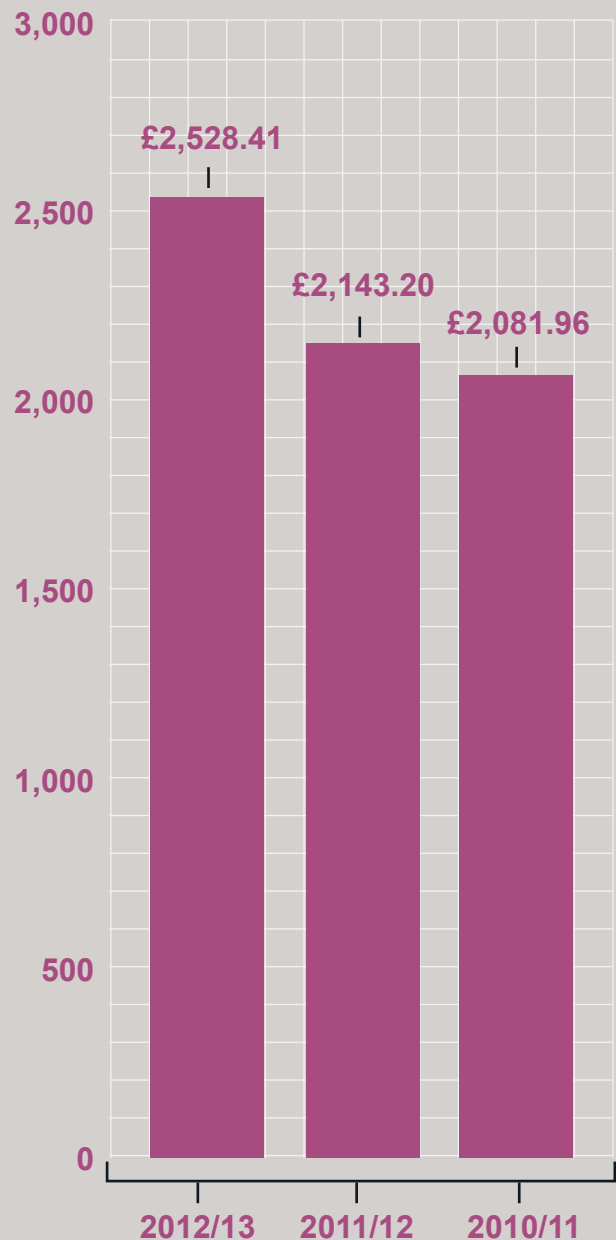


### The percentage of emergency repairs made safe within 24 hours

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	100%	100%	96.48%
<b>Target</b>	100%	99%	99%
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Improved</b>	same	✓	✗

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 100%

### Average spent per property on responsive repairs and capital works (improvements)





### The percentage of urgent repairs completed within five working days

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	99.63%	99.61%	95.61%
<b>Target</b>	98%	98%	98%
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Improved</b>	✓	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 98%

### The percentage of repairs where an appointment was made and kept

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	90.69%	92.35%	93.63%
<b>Target</b>	90%	90%	88%
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗	✗	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 90%

### Gas servicing completed on schedule

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	100%	100%	98.71%
<b>Target</b>	100%	100%	100%
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Improved</b>	same	✓	✗

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 100%

### Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:

- To offer repair appointments on Saturday afternoons. This increases the number of appointments by 288 over the year.
- To continue to improve the culture and application of health and safety to ensure tenants' safety

### The percentage of routine repairs completed within 20 working days

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	99.67%	99.86%	96.65%
<b>Target</b>	98%	98%	98%
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Improved</b>	✗	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 98%

### The percentage of hotline calls answered within 20 seconds

	2012/13	2011/12
<b>Performance</b>	86.33%	78.74%
<b>Target</b>	90%	80%
<b>Target met</b>	✗	✗
<b>Improved</b>	✓	new target

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 90%

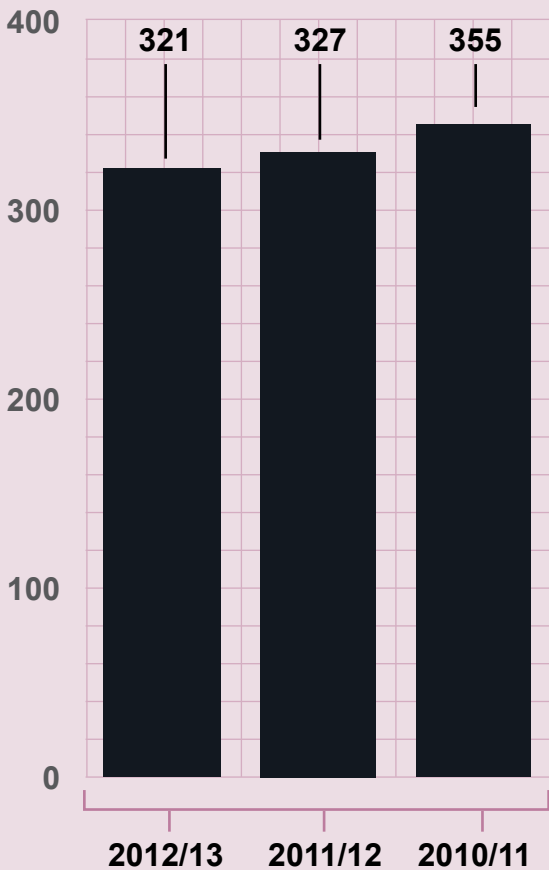
### Customers receiving a repair who were satisfied overall

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	94%	92%	92%
<b>Target</b>	88%	88%	86%
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✓	same	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 100%

- To introduce the Coins contractor management IT system
- To replace the district heating system at Barrow Hill
- To continue to achieve our target of completing 100% of annual gas servicing on schedule

### Number of requests made for minor adaptations



## Adaptations Service

The Housing Solutions Adaptations Team at Chesterfield Borough Council work with Social Services to look at ways of adapting properties to meet tenants' needs both now and in the future. Housing adaptations can enable tenants to remain in their own home for as long as it is safe and reasonable to do so.

### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Updated the Adaptations Service section of the Council's website to provide additional information and links to new publicity information
- Reviewed the internal processes involved following acceptance of a major adaptation to improve service delivery
- Provided a responsive minor adaptations service in certain circumstances
- Assessed the feasibility of a self-referral system to enable some minor adaptations to be completed without the need for a referral to Social Services

We will continue to consult tenants about the Adaptations Service through our Adaptation Users Forum. The aim of the Forum is to use tenants' own experiences of using the service to drive service improvements.

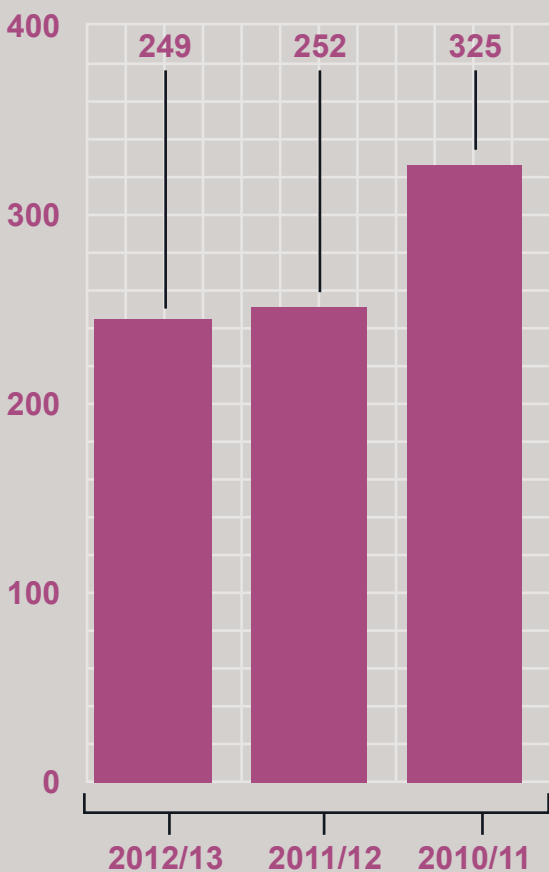
Examples of minor adaptations include internal or external grab rails, fitting of lever taps to sinks or baths, providing additional stair rails, providing hand rails and installing door entry systems.

Examples of major adaptations include level access showers, providing ramped access, installing stair lifts and providing wheelchair accessible kitchens.

The number of referrals made to the service is ultimately determined by Social Services' referral criteria. Social Services use strict criteria for all adaptation requests due to consistently high demand for adaptations.

Our aim is to keep people in their homes for as long as practically possible. We also seek to make the best use of the Council's Housing stock rather than adapt properties which are not suitable. We actively work with tenants who require adaptations to be carried out to their home to assess which option is right for them. This may involve assisting the tenant to move to a more suitable property or a property which is more adaptable for their long-term needs.

### Number of requests made for major adaptations





We were unable to carry out a number of disabled adaptations that were requested during 2012/13 due to the property being unsuitable. These tenants took the opportunity to move to more suitable properties, some of which had already been adapted. This was achieved through the close working relationship between the Adaptations Team and the Housing Solutions Team.

The majority of minor works are completed on the same day. However, there are exceptions where another contractor needs to carry out part of the work. Our excellent performance has been maintained through partnership working with our contractors.

#### The average number of days taken to complete minor works from start date to completion

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	1.5	1.02	1.05
<b>Target</b>	2	2	2
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗	✓	same

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 2 days. This is the target specified in the current adaptations contract

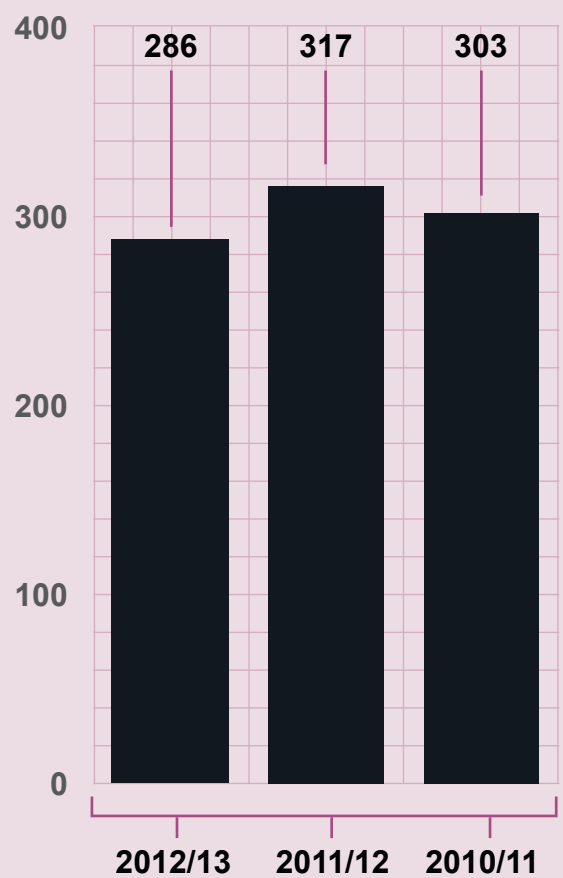
#### The average number of days taken to complete major works from start date to completion

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	4.2	4.46	5.3
<b>Target</b>	5	5	5
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Improved</b>	✓	✓	✗

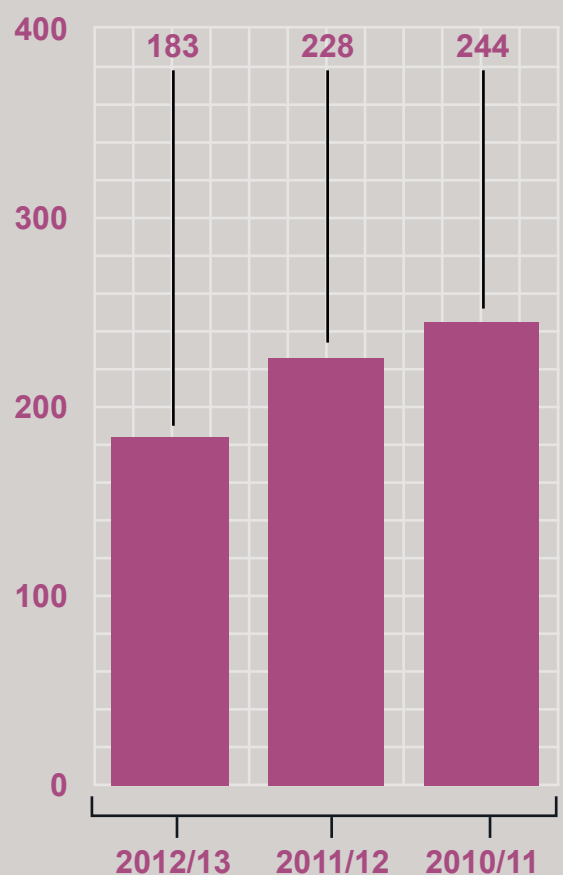
We have set our target for 2013/14 at 5 days. This is the target specified in the current adaptations contract

The adaptations contractor's performance has continued to improve in 2012/3. This has contributed to our improved performance in completing major works as well as the continued high level of customer satisfaction with the Adaptations Service.

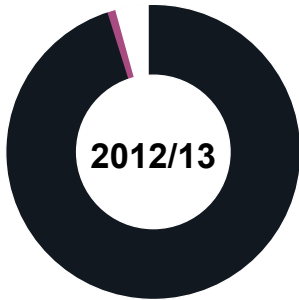
#### Number of minor adaptations completed



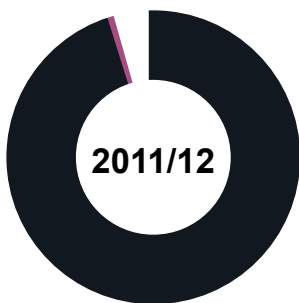
#### Number of major adaptations completed



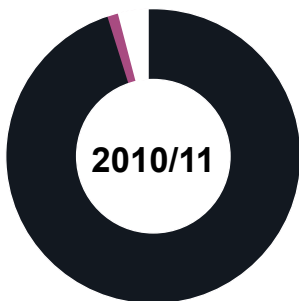
**Customers who were satisfied or very satisfied with the Adaptations Service**



<b>Performance</b>	<b>96.7%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Target met</b>	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✓



<b>Performance</b>	<b>96.5%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Target met</b>	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗



<b>Performance</b>	<b>96.9%</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Target met</b>	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 95%.

**Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:**

- To introduce a self-referral process to enable some minor adaptations to be completed without the need for a referral to Social Services.
- To review our purpose-built housing stock to consider where improvements for current and future tenants could be made
- To audit properties where substantial adaptations have been carried out to enable us to consider improvements





# How well are we doing on allocating homes?



**The Housing Solutions Centre offers advice on a wide range of issues related to finding and allocating properties.**

## Allocating Homes

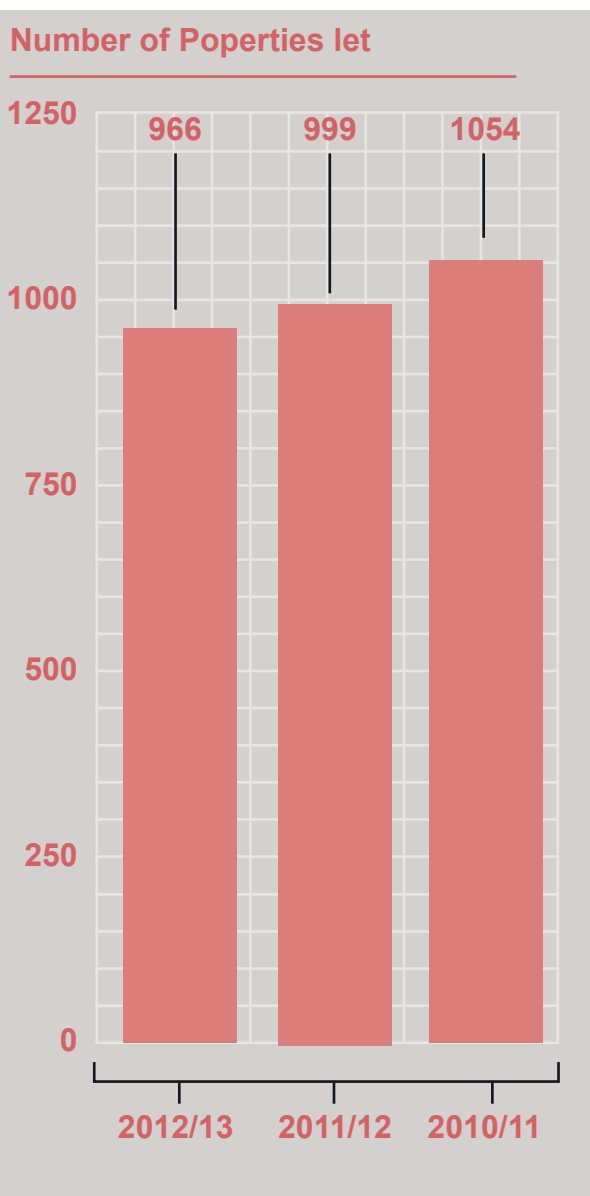
Chesterfield Borough Council operates a choice based lettings scheme. Eligible applicants are entitled to bid on vacant properties that are advertised through 'On the Move'.

The Council's Allocations and Transfer Policy works by applicants being placed in the following bands:

- **Priority Band** – applicants with severe/urgent needs for re-housing
- **Transfer Band** – CBC tenants with a need for rehousing
- **General Band 1** – non CBC tenants with a connection to the Borough and a need for rehousing
- **General Band 2** – all other applicants with no particular housing need and out of Borough applicants

We can provide help and assistance if you are homeless or threatened with homelessness. We will be able to advise you in person, by phone or by email.

We may arrange temporary accommodation if you have nowhere you can safely stay and if you have a 'Priority Need for Accommodation'. For example, you may have a child living with you.



### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Implemented changes to the Allocation Policy in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and to assist households affected by the welfare reform changes
- Appointed two officers to work with tenants who are facing difficulty as a result of welfare reform.
- Proactively assisted households wishing to move to more suitable and affordable properties through the choice-based letting scheme or by mutual exchange
- Developed a Tenancy Strategy

73 tenants were evicted for non-payment of rent despite being offered advice and assistance to prevent this from happening. This is 15 fewer than in 2011/12 which is a reduction of 17%.

The property type with the highest turnover is flats. This links to the high number of lettings made to single applicants with no children or access to children.

To meet our Lettable Standard, each home had all of the repairs completed before the new tenant moved in and had been thoroughly cleaned. Every new tenant received a 'Welcome Pack' which is a starter pack that includes some of the essential items needed when moving into a new home. Where appropriate the new tenant received a decoration allowance to assist with decoration.

### Tenancies terminated

Reason for termination of tenancy	Number of leavers
Moved to another CBC property	249
Deceased	144
Nominated to housing association	13
Moved to housing association	19
Moved to lodgings	145
Moved to nursing home	62
Moved to private rented	130
Purchased own property	26
Purchased own property - right to buy	37
Evicted for rent arrears	73
Absconded/abandoned	15
Reason not given	106
Moved out of area	21
Other	43



### The percentage of rent lost through empty homes

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	1.2%	1.08%	0.99%
<b>Target</b>	1%	1.1%	1.25%
<b>Target met</b>	✗	✓	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗	✗	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 2%

The extremely challenging target of 1% was not achieved due to our holding suitable empty properties for people who were moving due to the closure of two sheltered housing schemes.

### Average number of days to relet an empty home

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	28.05	27.83	24.45
<b>Target</b>	27	27	30
<b>Target met</b>	✗	✗	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 27 days

Lower than expected demand for the sub-regional scheme and the requirement to complete pre-tenancy checks that identify any support needs and potential anti-social behaviour problems, have impacted on performance.

Based on demand, the Allocations Policy has been amended to reduce the number of properties that are advertised to the sub-regional scheme from 2013/14. Where possible, pre-tenancy checks are now completed at application registration.

### The number of calendar days taken to complete repairs to an empty home

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	16.14	18.97	17.45
<b>Target</b>	17.5	17.5	19
<b>Target met</b>	✓	✗	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✓	✗	✓

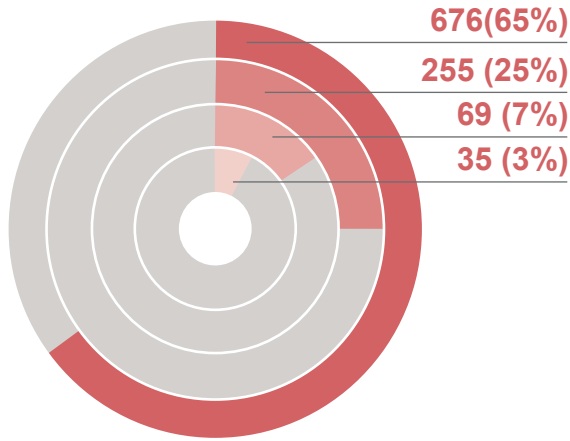
We have set our target for 2013/14 at 17.5 calendar days

### Who we rehoused

Demographic	Amount
All adult household	26
Elderly	142
Joint applicants with no children	62
Joint applicants with 1 child	56
Joint applicants with 2 children	28
Joint applicants with 3 children	20
Joint applicants with 4 or more children	13
Single applicants with no children/access to children	418
Single applicants with 1 child	90
Single applicants with 2 children	59
Single applicants with 3 children	33
Single applicants with 4 or more children	118

**Allocations**

- Housing Register**
- Transfer**
- Mutual Exchange**
- Sub Regional**



**The number of days to register a housing application**

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
<b>Performance</b>	10.96	5.31	6.08
<b>Target</b>	5	5	10
<b>Target met</b>	✗	✗	✓
<b>Improved</b>	✗	✓	✓

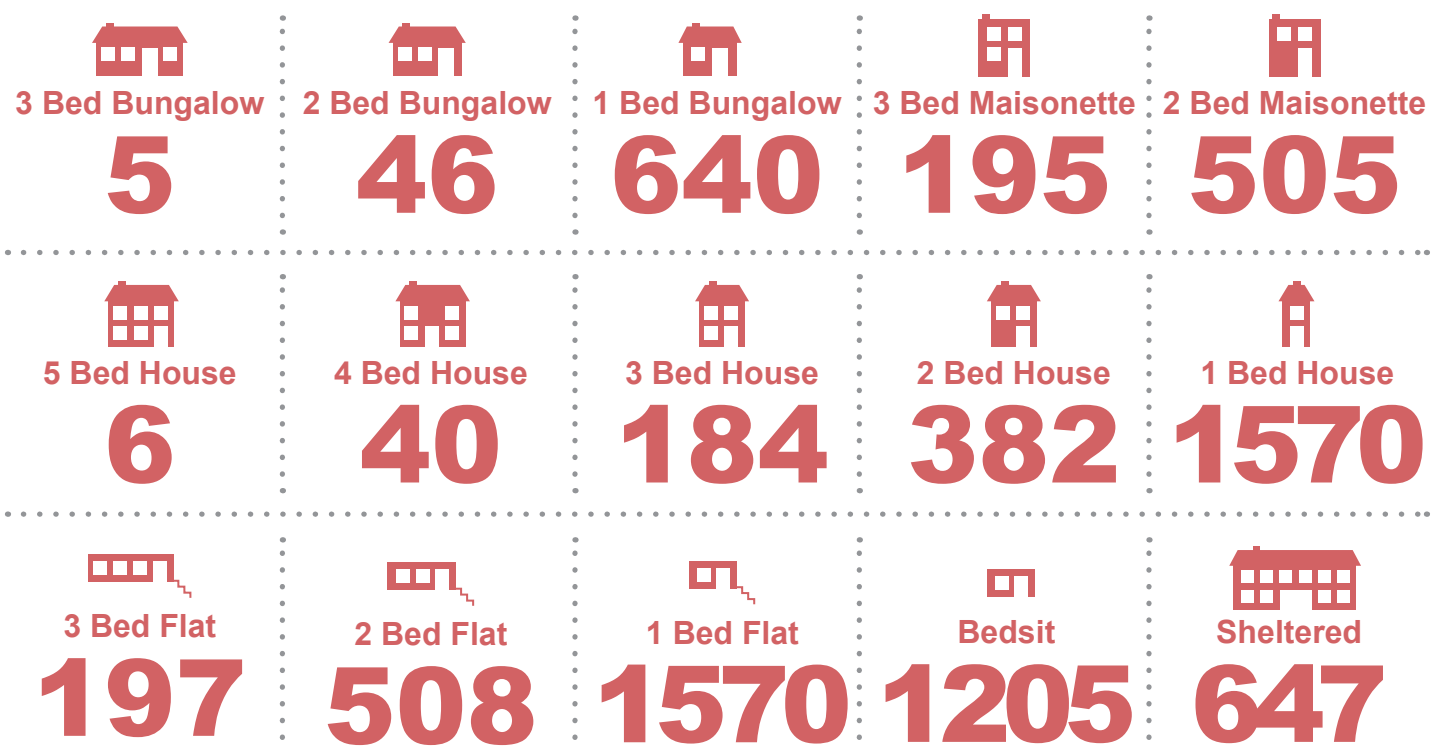
We have set our target for 2013/14 at 7.5 days

The sub-regional allocations are where the applicant has come from either Bolsover Council, North East Derbyshire Council or A1 Housing (Bassetlaw).

The target of registering housing applications within an average of five days was not achieved due to the increasing number of people approaching us for advice. On average we registered 223 applications a month during 2012/13.

We anticipate that the number of housing applications made over the next 12 months will increase and have set ourselves a challenging target to register applications within an average of 7.5 days.

**Applicants on the housing register at 31/3/13 and the property types they are eligible for (out of a total of 2000)**





Chesterfield Borough Council has subscribed to the HomeSwapper mutual exchange service. HomeSwapper holds details of people wanting to complete mutual exchanges within Chesterfield as well as details of those wishing to complete mutual exchanges from other areas.

We anticipate that HomeSwapper will be of great help to those affected by welfare reform and that more households who are under occupying accommodation will register for a mutual exchange.

The total number of live applications (households wanting to move) on 31 March 2013 was 2321. On 31 March 2012 it was 2630 which shows a slight reduction in the numbers on our waiting list. We review all applications annually to ensure that our waiting lists are up to date.

The highest numbers of applications are for households wanting to move due to:

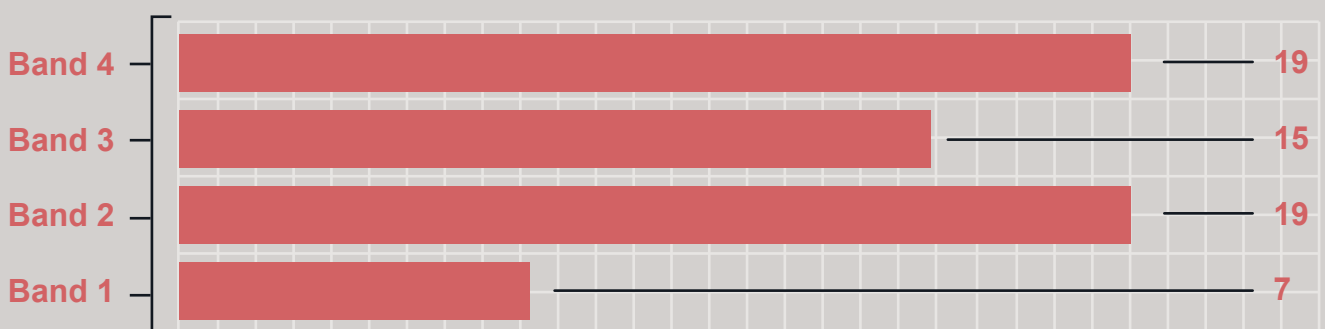
- Mortgage/rent too high
- Home unsuitable for medical reasons
- Move to independent living
- Overcrowded/under occupying
- Relationship breakdown
- Move near family/friends/school

Bidding for properties using the internet remains the most popular method. Internet bids can be made using the computer points in the Housing Solutions Centre. Free access to the internet is also available in libraries.

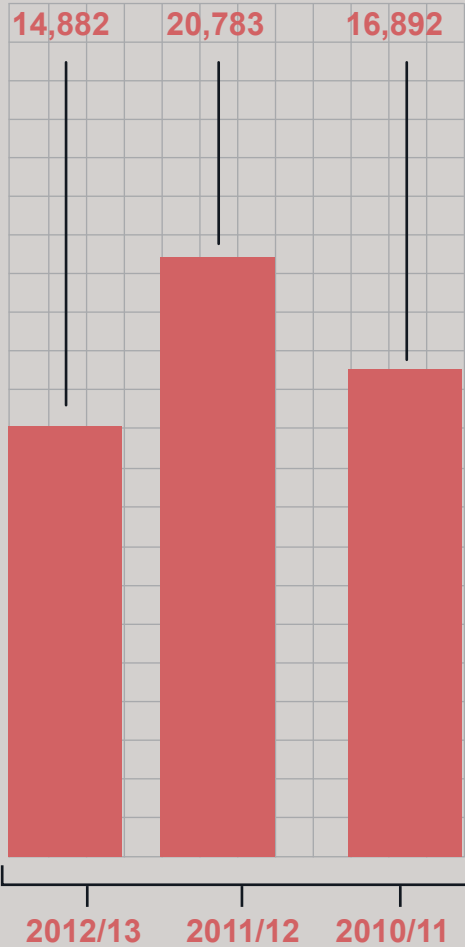
**As of the 31 March 2013 there were 428 Chesterfield Borough Council tenants registered for a mutual exchange**



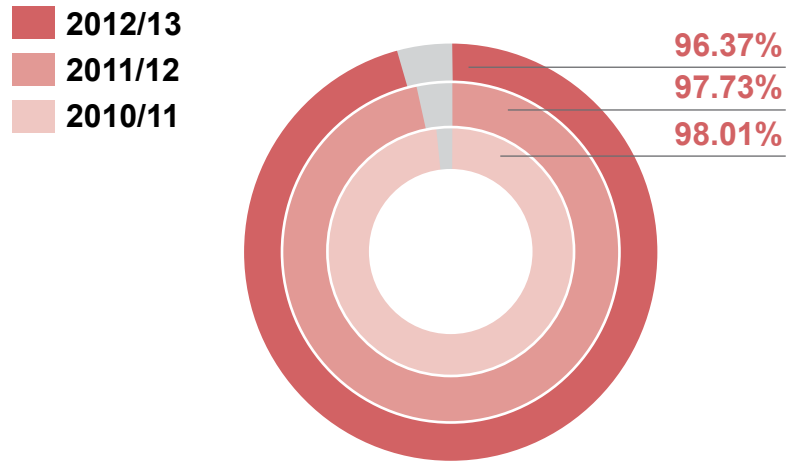
**Accommodation accepted by applicants from housing associations and private landlords following a nomination from On the Move**



### Number of bids received for properties



### Percentage of bids made via the internet



### Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:

- To make additional resources available via the Tenant Incentive Scheme to help households affected by under occupancy charges to complete mutual exchanges
- To help households who want to move who are affected by welfare reform by increasing the number of transfers
- To work in partnership with other housing providers to maximise accommodation available across all sectors
- To develop a Tenancy Policy

## Homelessness

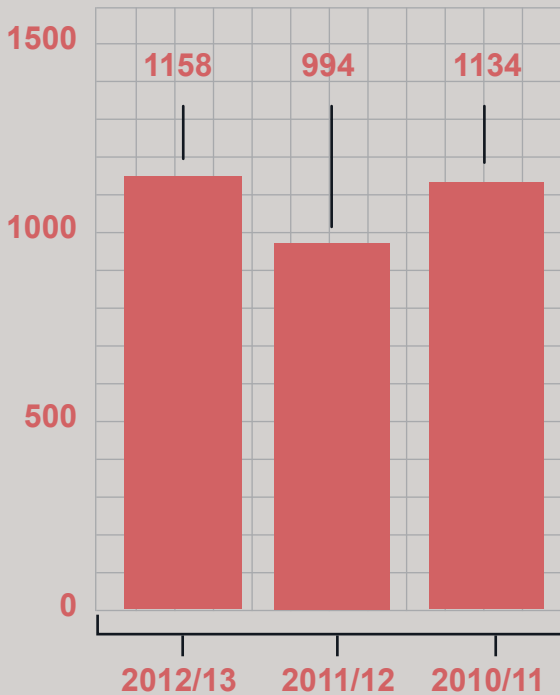
### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Changed the Allocations Policy to alleviate the impact of welfare reform and the Localism Act on homelessness
- Recruited two dedicated Housing Solutions Officers to facilitate mutual exchanges between eligible tenants
- Maintained low usage of bed and breakfast accommodation by utilising other interim accommodation wherever possible
- Continued to prevent homelessness by supporting key partner agencies
- Encouraged access to savings and cheaper lending for Chesterfield residents by working closely with the Credit Union
- Provided face-to-face advice to an increasing number of households

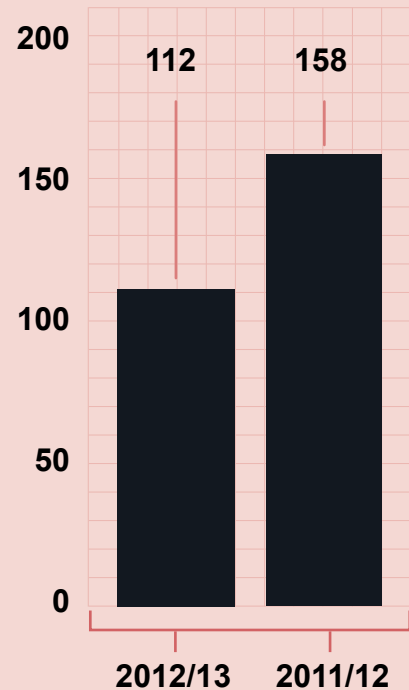
The main cause of homelessness in Chesterfield is now the ending of assured shorthold tenancies, this follows the national trend. Relationship breakdowns and evictions from friends and family are the next major reasons for homelessness. Homelessness arising from mortgage arrears remains low.



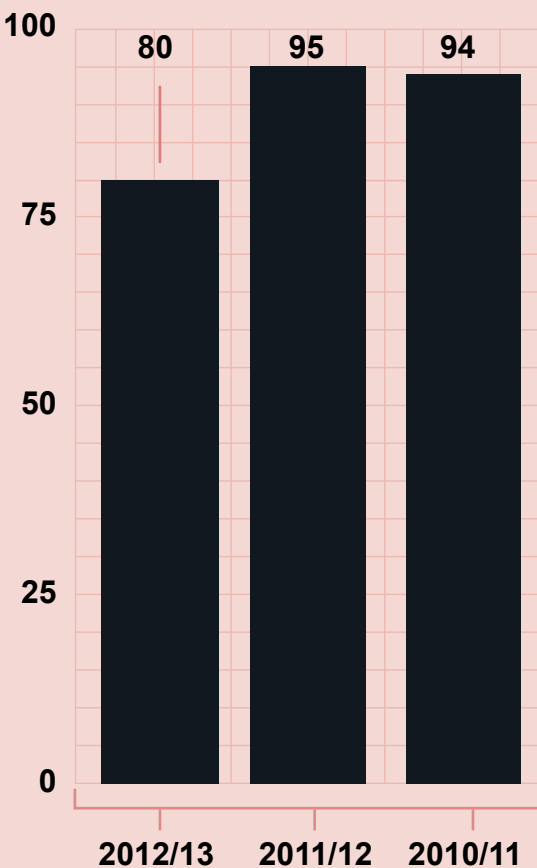
**Number of households who received face-to-face advice by the Homelessness Prevention Service through appointments and the emergency 'drop-in' service**



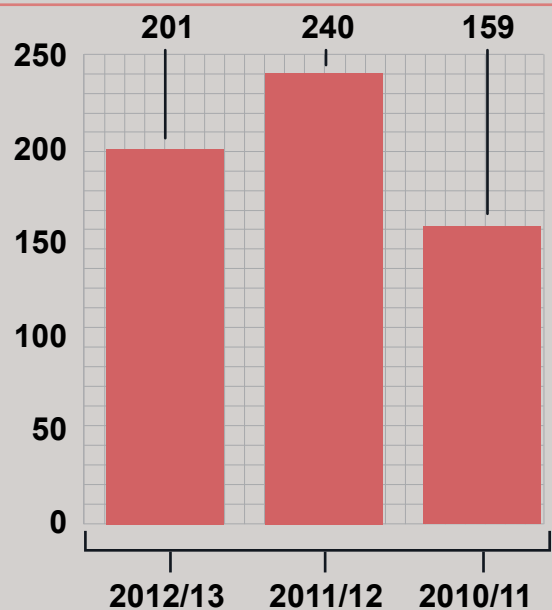
**Number of Households advised following contact via email, Council website and referrals from other agencies**



**Number of households accepted a full homelessness duty for**



**Number of households who were threatened with homelessness where service prevented or relieved homelessness**



By continuing to invest in preventative measures, we are able to prevent homelessness two and a half times as often as accepting households under the statutory homelessness provisions.

The Homelessness Prevention Team use a combination of homelessness prevention measures including negotiation with families and landlords, mortgage and debt advice, including the mortgage rescue scheme, sanctuary measures for people at risk of violence from ex-partners and the Tenancy Bond Guarantee Scheme.

We have continued to provide financial assistance, via our Homelessness Prevention Grant, to a number of agencies to assist us with our homelessness prevention activities.

This included:

- Pathways Day centre - a drop in centre for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- North Derbyshire Furniture Project
- The Pre-tenancy Support Scheme helping single people to secure accommodation primarily in the private sector
- Chesterfield Law Centre – assistance for households who are at risk of losing their home
- Working in partnership with the Credit Union to offer saving accounts

There is continued partnership working with supported accommodation and floating support providers to provide housing support for vulnerable households within the Borough, with funding mainly from Derbyshire Accommodation and Support.

The Homelessness Prevention Team continues to work with Derbyshire County Council to ensure safe housing outcomes for 16 and 17 year olds who are threatened with homelessness.

2013/14 is the year when the impacts of welfare reform will become apparent. We have already seen the impact of a reduction in the Local Housing Allowance and extending the shared room rate to under 35 year olds as the ending of assured shorthold tenancies now accounts for 31% of homelessness acceptances. 2013/14 sees the introduction of the under occupancy charge for working age tenants (the 'bedroom

tax'), reducing housing benefit rates, increased non-dependant deductions and the local Council Tax arrangements which are all likely to increase demand for the Homelessness Prevention Service.

#### Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:

- To be actively involved with the No Second Night Out initiative (NSNO). £200,000 of Government funding is aimed at reducing the number of rough sleepers in Derby and Derbyshire. Riverside-ECHG is coordinating the NSNO service in Derbyshire, offering a fast-response to help rough sleepers off the streets by seeing them quickly, assessing them and then referring them to temporary accommodation. It is estimated that around 24 people are rough sleeping on the streets of Derby and Derbyshire on any one night. Last year three of these were reported in Chesterfield but in the recent cold weather 28 people sought help from the Borough, seven on more than one occasion. The NSNO initiative gives a central referral point for rough sleepers and will help identify the on-going need.
- To work in partnership with North East Derbyshire, Bolsover and Action Housing to deliver a service aimed at reducing rough sleeping and homelessness amongst single, often non-priority households, by increasing access to the private rented sector and providing initial support to maintain the tenancy.
- To fund the Chesterfield Law Centre Court Desk for a further two years
- To continue to work in partnership with the Credit Union to encourage saving and planned expenditure
- To continue to offer the Tenancy Deposit Guarantee.
- To continue to offer the Sanctuary Scheme for households who need to secure their homes against a violent partner
- To provide basic cooking facilities (microwave, kettle and toaster) for households identified by the Homelessness Prevention Team or Tenancy Support

## How well are we doing on rents?



### Key achievements in 2012/13:

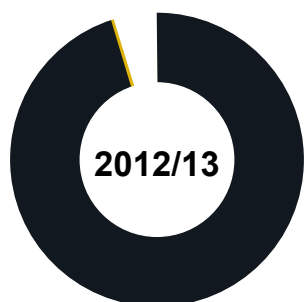
- Extended direct debits for weekly payers
- Changed card payments to add other services including Council Tax
- Made more payment options available including internet, telephone and face-to-face improvements
- Improved the information available for tenants on the Council's website
- Opened the new Customer Service Centre

The Council's new Customer Service Centre opened in March 2013 following a £300,000 refurbishment of the Revenues Hall. The refurbishment was financed largely by Arvato as part of its public-private partnership with the Borough and carried out by the Council's property services partner, Kier.

Counters and screens which could be a bit intimidating for some people have been removed to create open-plan areas, with privacy screens and comfortable seating. The Centre is welcoming and friendly. As well as having an experienced team of trained advisors to deal with queries, we've also installed easy-to-use payment machines. Customers can come in and pay their Council bills in a single quick drop-in.



## The percentage of rent collected

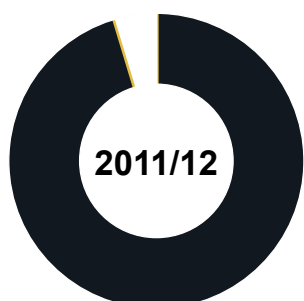


**Performance** 95.56%

**Target** 95.27%

**Target met** ✓

**Improved** ✗

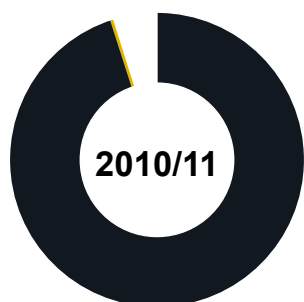


**Performance** 95.83%

**Target** 95.27%

**Target met** ✓

**Improved** ✓



**Performance** 95.49%

**Target** 95.27%

**Target met** ✓

**Improved** ✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 95.27%

On average our rents increased by 8.83% (£5.99) in line with Central Government guidelines.

In addition to the Customer Service Centre, there are many other methods for people to contact the council or pay bills and rent, including:

- Using Direct Debit. This can be set up by ringing **01246 345510** or by downloading a form at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk) and clicking on the Pay It link.
- Making payments online via the Council website at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk) by clicking on the Pay It link and following the instructions.
- Making payments over the phone by calling the automated 24-hour helpline **0845 602 0214**.
- Making payments at any of the 70 Post Office or PayPoint locations in the borough.

The percentage of rent collected is a key performance indicator for the Council's partnership with Arvato.

## Average weekly rents

Type of accomodation	Cost of rent p/w
3 Bed Maisonette	£96.83
2 Bed Maisonette	£87.73
1 Bed Maisonette	£83.45
4 Bed House	£100.55
3 Bed House	£92.39
2 Bed House	£86.35
1 Bed House	£68.23
4 Bed Flat	£108.11
3 Bed Flat	£109.89
2 Bed Flat	£91.90
1 Bed Flat	£83.82
Bedsit Flat	£66.08
3 Bed Bungalow	£99.54
2 Bed Bungalow	£87.91
1 Bed Bungalow	£80.82
Bedsit Bugalow	£70.96

## Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:

- To employ and train more staff to assist tenants struggling to meet rental liabilities as a result of welfare reform
- To refine processes to ensure that tenants in difficulty receive effective advice and support
- To campaign to increase the take up of direct debit as this is the most cost-effective payment method for the Council and the most secure and convenient payment method for tenants

## How well are we doing on looking after the neighbourhood and communal areas?



**Our definition of anti-social behaviour (ASB) is unreasonable conduct which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and interferes with that person's right to quiet enjoyment of their home.**

All our tenants sign a tenancy agreement. If a tenant or a member of a tenant's household or any visitor to a tenant's home is involved in ASB, this breaks the tenancy agreement.

When the tenancy agreement is broken, we can take legal action. This may include a number of actions, including eviction. However, eviction must be used as a last resort, where other actions have failed and where we have done everything that is reasonably and practically appropriate to support a tenant to maintain their tenancy.

We give our new tenants introductory tenancies (also known as "probationary" tenancies). The purpose of an introductory tenancy is to allow us a year to find out whether a new tenant behaves reasonably. When a tenant's behaviour has been acceptable for a year, the tenant then becomes a secure tenant.





### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Improved our customer satisfaction results and remained among the best performing social housing providers in the country.
- Researched good practice and introduced a prize draw to increase the number of returned ASB questionnaires. We also introduced a customer contract which specifies responsibilities including the requirement for customers to keep our contact information for them up-to-date.
- Worked towards reducing the average number of days taken to resolve ASB cases.
- Led a major project involving the design and trial of a new IT system (ECINS) that enables organisations that deal with victims and perpetrators of ASB to share information to protect and support victims. The system is currently being piloted and will be rolled out to other Derbyshire districts this year.
- Piloted the display of contact details with photographs to make it easier for people to contact us. Feedback has been encouraging and we will now roll out this initiative to the whole Borough.
- Been involved in several education campaigns with SpirePride to highlight the problems caused by dog fouling. These have involved joint patrols, door-knocking, the provision of advice and information on the costs and the diseases caused and encouragement to report offenders. We provide window stickers and notices for residents so that they can make it clear that dog fouling will not be tolerated in their neighbourhood.
- Worked with the local community on a number of different projects to make best use of land, improve estates and to create diversionary activities.

In 2012/13 we dealt with 446 ASB cases. This is 123 fewer cases than the previous year (approximately 22%). This follows a general national and local trend, with the Police reporting substantially fewer ASB and crime cases.

The results of our 2012/13 ASB customer satisfaction surveys are listed on the next page.



### Customers who were satisfied or very satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Performance	91%	91%	81%
Target	87%	85%	75%
Target met	✓	✓	✓
Improved	same	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 87%

### Customers who found it easy or very easy to contact a member of staff to report a complaint about ASB

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Performance	92%	90%	83%
Target	90%	90%	80%
Target met	✓	✓	✓
Improved	✓	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 90%

### Customers who were satisfied or very satisfied that they were kept informed about what was happening throughout their ASB case

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Performance	92%	87%	80%
Target	87%	85%	75%
Target met	✓	✓	✓
Improved	✓	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 87%

### Customers who were satisfied or very satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Performance	93%	85%	76%
Target	87%	80%	70%
Target met	✓	✓	✓
Improved	✓	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 87%

### Customers who rated the time taken for them to be interviewed as good or fair

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Performance	96%	94%	90%
Target	90%	90%	75%
Target met	✓	✓	✓
Improved	✓	✓	✓

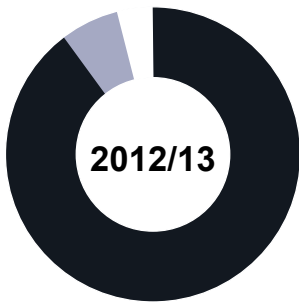
We have set our target for 2013/14 at 90%

### Customers who were satisfied or very satisfied with the support given to them during their ASB case

	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Performance	92%	88%	79%
Target	88%	85%	75%
Target met	✓	✓	✓
Improved	✓	✓	✓

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 88%

## Customers who have made a complaint of ASB who would be willing or very willing to report ASB again in the future

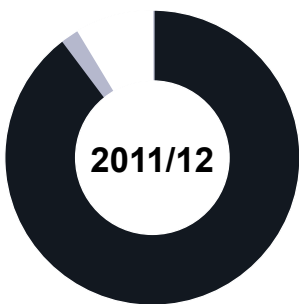


Performance 96%

Target 90%

Target met ✓

Improved ✓

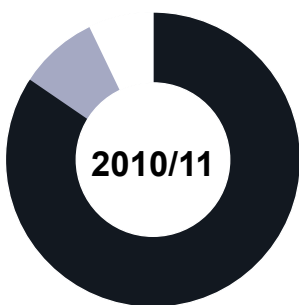


Performance 92%

Target 90%

Target met ✓

Improved ✓



Performance 88%

Target 85%

Target met ✓

Improved ✓

We have improved the written information provided to people who report ASB so that it is clear to them what we can and cannot do, and what we need people to do to work with us to resolve the problem.

Using HouseMark we compared these results with those of other housing providers across England and Wales. We are delighted with the results, which again place us amongst the best performers in England and Wales. Nevertheless, we remain mindful that we must continue to work hard on maintaining them.

## Addressing ASB in neighbourhoods

In 2012/13 we continued to improve our partnership working with the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Teams. In addition to our office at Birchwood Road Police Station, the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team provided us with an office at the St John's Road Police Station which has improved information sharing and our ability to act swiftly to address community problems.

KickR is a project initiated by the Police based around football training for local youngsters that provides a supervised activity to keep them occupied and helps the youngsters to respect themselves and people in authority. In 2011/12, we were involved with the project in the south of the Borough. In 2012/13, we took a leading role working with the Police to extend KickR to the Newbold area, based at Newbold Community School and Stand Road Park. Our Neighbourhood Rangers are crucial in running the project and they have attended an FA coaching course.

Our Neighbourhood Rangers report that youngsters who attend and many others in the area are far more receptive to their requests, for instance, to play football on the local park rather than in residential areas. The Police and Community Safety Team consider that these projects have helped reduce crime and ASB substantially in the areas that they operate.

We felt that in some ASB 'hotspot' areas people were often nervous about approaching our team. We continued to carry out regular estate walkabouts and joint door knocks with the Police.

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 90%

## Cleanliness, appearance and safety of neighbourhoods

Our customers have told us that they want their neighbourhoods to be cleaner and greener. We have an important role to play with this, in partnership with people who live in our neighbourhoods. The main activity of our Neighbourhood Rangers is to inspect land and property to ensure that it remains free of waste, litter and graffiti. They also check that gardens are kept to an acceptable standard and that fire risks in blocks of flats are minimised.

To engage with our tenants we consult our eight Area Panels about how the Estates Improvements Budget should be spent. Each Area Panel has £20,000 to spend on improvements to their neighbourhoods. A variety of projects have been completed following consultation with the Area Panels, including:

- Fencing to improve security
- Bollards to prevent vehicles driving onto grassed areas
- Tree planting
- Contributions to community gardens and the donation of Housing land
- Landscaping

We are looking forward to residents suggesting many more improvements for their neighbourhoods.

### Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:

- To increase the number of people who return ASB questionnaires. We will develop a new performance measure for our Team Leaders to help maintain emphasis on this important indicator
- To reduce the number of days taken to resolve cases
- To introduce an ASB contract between ourselves and people who report ASB. This will state clearly what people can expect of us, including the frequency that we will keep them updated about the progress of their case and how we expect the person to help us to resolve the problem.
- To increase the number of referrals we make to organisations that can provide specialist support for vulnerable perpetrators of ASB to help them change their behaviour. Our attendance at Multi-Agency Team







meetings will increase opportunities for referrals and partnership working with support providers.

- To seek opportunities to use Housing land for projects that improve the environment, particularly those that provide educational opportunities, help inter-generational understanding, provide activities and enjoyment for older and disabled people and provide a focus for residents to engage with other residents and the Council.
- To increase awareness of the health and environmental costs of dog fouling. Where appropriate we will work with SpirePride to reduce dog fouling on individual and community gardens

## Careline and Wardens Service

Careline is a service available to anyone living within Chesterfield who may consider themselves vulnerable and in need of reassurance and security. At the touch of a button you can speak to our trained operators whenever you need assistance day or night, seven days a week.

The Floating Support Service can visit you in your home at a frequency to suit your needs. Officers provide a 24-hour emergency response to calls for Telecare assistance via Careline and have specialist equipment to lift anyone who has fallen at home.

Chesterfield Borough Council is working with Derbyshire County Council to provide the Telecare Service to help tenants to live more safely in their home. We can provide discreet sensors which can be tailored to meet personal needs. These could include sensors that detect if you have had a fall, carbon monoxide or gas emissions and flooding.

### Key achievements in 2012/13:

- Retained the Derbyshire Support and Accommodation Team Contract for the Floating Support Service
- Restructured the service to provide an enhanced support and response service
- Restructured the Mobile Warden Service to deliver the service in line with the Derbyshire Accommodation and Support Team's contract
- Reviewed Support Plans and Risk Assessments to include planning for working towards successful outcomes with our service users

## Number of calls handled by Careline

**86**

Required Police

**159**

Required Fire Service

**1026**

Required a Doctor

**412**

Required an Ambulance

**1030**

Where customer had fallen

**2517**

Required an out of hours visit by a mobile warden

## Percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds

	2012/13	2011/12
Performance	98.53%	98.57%
Target	98.5%	98.5%
Target met	✓	✓
Improved	✗	new target

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 98.5%

## Percentage of calls answered within 180 seconds

	2012/13	2011/12
Performance	99.93%	99.95%
Target	99%	99%
Target met	✓	✓
Improved	✗	new target

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 99%

## Percentage of call outs attended within 45 minutes

	2012/13	2011/12
Performance	97.11%	97.71%
Target	97.71%	90%
Target met	✓	✓
Improved	✗	new target

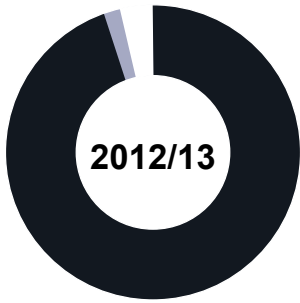
We have set our target for 2013/14 at 95%

## Percentage of call outs attended within 60 minutes

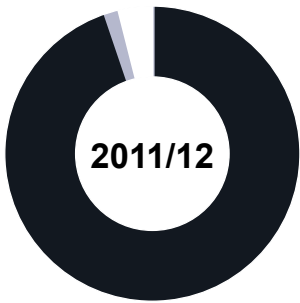
	2012/13	2011/12
Performance	99.96%	100%
Target	99.97%	100%
Target met	✗	✗
Improved	✗	new target

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 99%

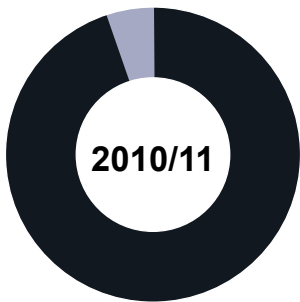
**Customers who were satisfied or very satisfied with the response when they used the Careline alarm**



Performance	97.3%
Target	95%
Target met	✓
Improved	same



Performance	97.3%
Target	95%
Target met	✓
Improved	✗



Performance	100%
Target	95%
Target met	✓
Improved	same

We have set our target for 2013/14 at 95%

We are pleased that we have been able to maintain our consistently high customer satisfaction performance.

**Planned improvements for 2013/14 are:**

- To offer an enhanced accompanied viewing service for vulnerable people. The Sheltered Scheme Manager will be present to provide support information to potential new tenants.
- To retain the Derbyshire Accommodation and Support Team's contract for Careline
- To provide an improved and enhanced support service
- To increase our customer base to allow more residents in Chesterfield to benefit from the Service





# How well are we doing on value for money?



**We constantly review the way that we approach value for money and efficiency savings and ensure that we have a process in place to obtain the best value for money throughout the Housing Service.**

We have implemented the following measures to ensure that value for money remains part of the culture within Housing Services:

- Value for money appears as a standard agenda item for meetings of the Housing Management Team and the Senior Management Team at Operational Services Division
- Team Briefs include value for money as a standard item
- The Quality Improvement Team, which is a group of operatives and managers, has value for money as a standard agenda item
- A named lead officer within each of the three Housing Divisions champions and captures value for money data and produces a departmental Efficiency Statement
- An Efficiency Register for Housing Services to ensure that all efficiencies are captured and recorded. This will enable us to demonstrate how we have thought about and applied value for money within Housing Services in the future. The efficiency savings set out in this Register are scrutinised and validated by the Council's Finance Section. In 2012/13 the efficiency saving claimed amounts to £74,000

**Each £1  
of rent was  
spent on:**

**62p**

Major Repairs



**18p**

Responsive Repairs



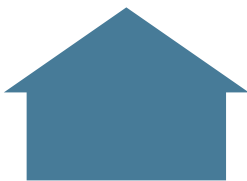
**6p**

Housing Management



**5.5p**

Overheads



**4p**

Supported Housing



**2.5p**

Estate Services



**2p**

Other



## How well are we doing on ensuring we are financially secure?



In previous Annual Reports we were looking ahead to the introduction of the new housing self-financing system. This came into being from April 2012 and, as a part of the arrangement with Government, we had to effectively buy ourselves out of the old system by taking on a new debt from the Government of approximately £118million.

We remain confident that we can manage this debt over the next 30 years and still have money left over to spend on our homes and on services for tenants. We may even be able to borrow a little more and do a few interesting projects that we could not otherwise have considered. For example, the imminent building of a replacement sheltered housing scheme at Parkside, off Whittington Moor. Plans are also in progress for 40 new Council homes with the prospect of more to follow.

We will soon achieve the minimum standard, the Decent Homes Standard, across all of our homes and many of our homes already exceed this standard.

One of the next challenges is to agree with tenants the appropriate "Chesterfield Standard" for the next 10 to 20 years and balance the costs of this, and other essential expenditure, against rent levels.

On balance, self-financing looks to be of benefit to Chesterfield's tenants and we look forward to improving homes more quickly or to higher standards than might have been possible before.





## Changes to Housing Benefit

From April 2013 the so called “bedroom tax” was implemented nationally. This is a reduction in Housing Benefit if you are deemed to have more bedrooms than the Government’s rules allow, a 14% reduction for one bedroom too many or 25% for two bedrooms too many.

As a landlord and Housing Benefit administrator, the Council has a legal duty to implement the new welfare reform rules. However, we recognise that many of our tenants are affected by these changes and have already introduced new or improved measures to help people seek smaller, more affordable accommodation.

Amongst the measures is a Tenant Incentive Scheme to give financial help to tenants freeing up the needed accommodation, a revised Allocations Policy which will generate additional transfers of smaller housing and additional staff to help guide tenants through their housing options. We have also introduced an improved mutual exchange scheme to help match those tenants wanting larger properties with those needing smaller homes.

All affected tenants have been written to and have been asked to contact us. We would encourage anyone struggling to make payments to talk to us now so that we can offer advice and alternatives, including payment arrangements. The telephone number to ring is 01246 345504.

We will also give particular support to tenants who are suffering from financial hardship where it is not possible for them to move. Ring 01246 345484 for an application form or call in to our Customer Service Centre for advice.

Tenants wanting advice or information on moving home are asked to ring or visit “On the Move”, the Council’s shop front for allocations and advice on Low Pavement (telephone **01246 345700**).









**ARE WE  
ACCESSIBLE  
TO YOU?**

**IF NOT  
- ASK US!**

- We want everyone to be able to understand us.
- We want everyone to be able to read our written materials.
- We aim to provide what you need for you to read, talk and write to us.

**On request we will provide free**

- Language interpreters, including for sign language.
- Translations of written materials into other languages.
- Materials in Braille, large print, on tape or Easy Read.

**Please contact us:**

**Voice Telephone: 01246 345345**

**Fax: 01246 345252**

**Mobile Text Phone SMS: 07960 910264**

**Email: [eoinfo@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:eoinfo@chesterfield.gov.uk)**